AGRICULTURE

CONSIDERED AS A

MORAL and POLITICAL

DUTY;

In a SERIES of LETTERS,

INSCRIBED

TO HIS MAJESTY.

AND RECOMMENDED

To the Perusal and Attention of every Gentleman of Landed Property in the three Kingdoms,

AS THEY ARE CALCULATED

For the ENTERTAINMENT, INSTRUCTION, and BENEFIT of MANKIND.

Nonnunquam horreis præclusis populo famem indixit.

By WILLIAM DONALDSON,
Late Secretary to the Government of Jamaica.

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ERRATA.

Page 35. *for* names, *read* manes.
78. line 7. *for* kindoms, *read* kingdoms.
82. --- 17. --- moſt, ------ muſt.
89. --- 17. --- deſcribed ------ deſcribed.
168. --- 10. --- precuſers ------ precurſors.
178. --- 11. In the ſecond Greek word the laſt letter but two *for* Xi, *put a* Kappa.

AGRICULTURE

CONSIDERED AS A

MORAL and POLITICAL DUTY.

LETTER I.

Introduction—Addreſſes to great Men dangerous and unprofitable—Libels, from a Malevolence of Mind only, encouraged—Portrait of a wiſe Prince.

To His MAJESTY.

SIR!

THE clamour of the factious, but more the complaints of the diſtreſſed, at the preſent exorbitant prices, impoſed upon every ſort of proviſion, are ſuch honeſt, ſuch perſuaſive remonſtrances to rational policy, ſuch appeals to humanity, that a man muſt be negligent in the moral and political duties of life, not to

offer his ſentiments as an expedient for removing an evil, at once ſo alarming and ſo piteous. An evil, that unnerves our national commerce; diſpirits the poor, from the apprehenſion of famine; expoſes many, of ſmall incomes, to difficulties they are unprepared to encounter; arms *Typhæus* with plauſibility to aſſiſt his malignant deſigns of throwing the ſtate into confuſion, and expoſing our governors to the reſentments of a deluded, deſperate people.

However inadequate to the vaſt deſign, exemplary merit muſt be allowed to thoſe who attempt an *under-part* in it. I view myſelf in that *inferior* capacity. Self-approbation, ariſing from the intention, is the only recompence I expect: Royal munificence, I leave to thoſe whoſe ampler diſcoveries may accompliſh an end ſo devoutly wiſhed; for however ſatisfy'd I may be, from an opinion of my own importance, I am ever charmed with a man more excellent and worthier than myſelf.

I ad-

I addreſs this compendium of the evils, which the moſt valuable ſubjects of this kingdom groan under, to a prince, who apparently eſtimates his power, only, as it is the intermediate agent of gratifying his inclination to do good, and of rendering his government ſubſervient to the happineſs of his people.

Here the malevolent will take the alarm, and upbraid me for this tribute of my zeal. If avarice had any ſhare in the inſcription, I ſhould not have been ſo daring. The man who has no other ſupport, than an intellectual property, writes truth at the hazard of famiſhing. It is too fatally known that we live not in the Auguſtan age, when the ſeeds of genius were cultivated, and called forth by the foſtering hand of a Mæcenas, whoſe high appointment of perpetual Prefect ſtrengthened his inclination to countenance men of learning and abilities. I mean that Mæcenas who liberally adviſed Auguſtus to

confer the ſame privileges upon the conquered Britons as the citizens of Rome enjoyed, and to rank thoſe brave people with the *Socii* of the Roman empire. Neither do we live in thoſe delectable times when ladies choſe rather to kiſs the lips of a ſuperannuated unlaced ſcholar, than liſten to flattery from the mouth of embroidered, ſmooth-faced ignorance. Margaret, queen to Charles the ſeventh, of France, was a lover of the *belles lettres*, and manifeſted the warmeſt, yet immaculate, affection for men of genius and learning; paſſing one day through the ſaloon of the palace, ſhe obſerved Allen Chartier, the king's ſecretary, aſleep in a chair; old and unfavoured in his perſon, but the moſt learned and eloquent man of his time. The princeſs approached and kiſſed him! This unprecedented action gave an alarm to thoſe who attended her, but ſhe explained away their aſtoniſhment, by telling them, it was not the *man* whom ſhe had ſaluted,

but

but the mouth from whence flowed ſo many oracles. Thoſe were the ſeaſons propitious to men of genius, when the partiality of nature was approved, by countenancing her favourites; but now, when the jargon of political recrimination is read with more avidity, than the language of elegance, an author muſt be ſatisfied with leſs honourable expectations; he can depend only upon thoſe who patronize ſcurrility, and abuſe. This neglect of literary merit, has given an ungenerous turn to the mind, and produced ſo many readers and writers of libels.

Kings are the ſervants of God; they are inveſted with dominion, from a predilection in the Almighty to mankind, the favourites of his creation: His attributes are inſtructions to thoſe imperial governors; and ſo far as they obſerve and imitate thoſe divine precepts, they fulfil their high commiſſion, and maintain the dignity of their office. On the contrary, when they de-

part from moral excellency, and become neglectful of their duty, in that inſtant they forget their rank, and forfeit the condition of their appointment.

Xunchi, the Tartar, founder of the family who now ſit upon the throne of Chiha, when death was about to revoke his commiſſion, called together his children; and after convincing them that the end of his greatneſs was approaching, he enquired who among them had fortitude enough to undertake the burthen of a new-conquered empire? His eldeſt ſon, with a diffidence ſeldom underſtood by princes, declined the ſucceſſion, declaring himſelf too weak to ſuſtain ſo weighty a charge! Kamhi, the younger ſon, as if by divine inſpiration, proſtrating himſelf before his expiring father, and with a conſtancy never heard of in a child only nine years of age, told the emperor, he felt himſelf ſtrong enough to undertake the adminiſtration of an empire, which the courage and virtue of Xunchi

had

had reſtored to, and was about to leave in peace and tranquility; that the conduct of his anceſtors ſhould be an invariable inſtruction to him: that while he kept ſuch noble examples in view, he doubted not but he ſhould govern the nation to the ſatisfaction of his people!

What parent could withſtand ſuch intuition? He appointed Kamhi to the ſucceſſion, under the regency of four of the wiſeſt, and moſt virtuous men in his confidence. Kamhi's mind was diſciplined to the arduous taſk of governing his own paſſions, as the firſt ſtep to his knowledge of mankind; it is therefore no wonder that by controlling them, he knew how to manage the tempers of his ſubjects. Human paſſions ariſe from the ſame incentives, and only differ in the degrees of operation from ſome conſtitutional frailty, ſo that the action of every mind, if properly conſulted and underſtood, is a convex mirror,

in which you may behold the epitome of all mankind.

Kamhi demonſtrated very early in life great ſtrength of body and of mind; he retained both; and how?

He avoided the allurements of women; and though, from a national miſtake, he was allowed the indulgence of many wives, he was ſcarce ever ſeen, with ſlothful dalliance, loitering away his time in voluptuous effeminacy.

Wine he uſed with Spartan moderation, and was of opinion that every drunkard ſhould be exhibited in the ſame manner as the Lacedemonians expoſed their ſlaves, for an example, to deter others from ſo ſhameful and unnatural a practice.

He was an early riſer, and by imbibing the fragrance of the morning air, he preſerved the bloom of health, which vermillioned his cheeks with a natural beauty, far excelling the falſe colour of the moſt artful and pernicious impoſitions. Exerciſe

and

and temperance are the beſt face-painters; they only want encouragement to be univerſally known and admired.

Princes are luminaries, and, like the ſun, muſt be gazed on at a diſtance, and thro' ſome medium: Kamhi had not altogether ſhut his mind againſt this ſplendid idea; he preſerved ſome ſhew of eaſtern magnificence, but it ſeemed rather in compliance to the general inclination of his people, than to gratify the inſolence of ſelf-admiration.

The jeſuits (a proſcribed people in our days) had the credit of enriching the mind of this young prince; it was owing to the induſtry, care, and abilities, of three ingenious and patient men of their college, that Kamhi was qualified to examine the Chineſe upon their own books, the Tartars in military exerciſes, and the Europeans in mathematics.

He inured his countrymen to hunting, ſhooting, incamping, and other warlike exer-

exercises, to secure to them their natural powers, and prevent their becoming effeminate, like the Chinese, through idleness and inactivity.

He was intrepid, wise, and fortunate: He subdued the most formidable conspiracy, before the traitors had caused any commotion in the empire.

No minister, however powerful, from interest or fortune, escaped his resentment, if justly accused.

Calumny was never suffered to approach nearer than his ear, and the slanderer was never recompenced for his disobedient reproaches.

He promoted industry, by encouraging the industrious: He often remitted the taxes to the provinces, in time of dearth: He distributed money to age and imbecility: He gave labour to the necessitous husbandman.

He was a friend to commerce, and endeavoured by bounties from his own revenues

nues to give a ſpirit to trade: The Ruſſian merchants frequently experienced his munificence.

He was ſtrict and liberal to the ſoldiers; he kept them conſtantly employed, and paid their debts, when the ſcarcity of the times exorbitated an expence above their ordinary allowance.

He maintained his paternal character, by his elevated virtue; by the dignity and civility of his government he preſerved a reſpect, and ſubordination, to the authority of magiſtrates; encouraged a return of affection from them, and marked out the reciprocal duty from the ſubject to the emperor.

Such was the repreſentative of God in China! His fidelity as a ſervant, was manifeſted in the wiſdom of his adminiſtration; he was grateful to *his* ſovereign; affectionate to his ſubjects; benevolent to all mankind. His moral, and political

virtues

virtues were amply rewarded; he enjoyed long life, and his people happineſs.

This is the faithful outline, from an highly finiſhed original, and worthy to be ſtudied by thoſe royal artiſts who wiſh to excel in the vaſt deſign and execution of government. I could here forego the uſual jealouſy of cotemporary writers, and aſſimilate many of thoſe virtues in your majeſty; but to avoid commentitious ſlander, I will be influenced by Peſcennius Niger, who forbad a panegyriſt of his day, to write any thing in his praiſe, and adviſed him, if he valued the ſafety of his perſon, or character, to exert his talents in reciting the actions of the dead, who could neither injure him by their reſentments, nor recompenſe him thro' vanity. Thus the zeal of an honeſt affection is reſtrained, and the moſt grateful employment conſigned to poſterity, who having no intereſt, but in truth, will do juſtice to your Majeſty's character, and future

patriots,

patriots, finding no gratification, no purpoſe anſwered in beſmearing the portrait, will approve your virtues, by imitating them.

Here is another political miſtake; for panegyric not being the favourite of the preſent day, the encomiaſt is expoſed to the rudeſt interpretation; he no ſooner offers a tribute of praiſe to his ſovereign, but he is ſlandered as a political general, uſing the meaneſt artifices to betray the royal garriſon into a capitulation favourable to his own particular intereſt: I acquit myſelf of this imputation, when I aſſure theſe commentators, whoſe promptitude I am aware of, that I ſet too high a value upon my integrity, and too mean a price upon my abilities, to proſtitute the one, or expect reward for the other; yet at the ſame time confeſs, if the meaner paſſions ſhould actuate my mind to a deſign of making advantageous terms with the crown,

crown, I ſo far diſapprove the uſual mode, adopted by our preſent patriotic engineers, that I would ſooner attempt it by negociation, than by ſtorm. As this prolepſis is co-incident with the times, there needs no apology for obtruding it.

This firſt letter may be conſidered as the proem, or prefatory addreſs to your Majeſty; in which the motive to this undertaking dawns upon the mind, and faintly promiſes to illuminate the ſubject, with intellectual proſpects, hitherto unobſerved in the walks of agriculture: Confident that Agriculture, the great object of my preſent concern, muſt have ſuffered various changes from the earlieſt times of moral impulſion, through the different ages of heroiſm and refinement, to the preſent day of political abſonance, I ſtrolled heedleſsly through the annals of mankind, and caught the different appearances which Agriculture put on, at thoſe favourable or

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unfavourable seasons of flattery or neglect, which in the course of these letters I shall endeavour to describe. I am,

SIR,

Your most faithful,

and in that fidelity,

Your MAJESTY's

most undesigning subject,

and servant.

LET-

LETTER II.

Agriculture recommended as the great Object of Attention—its Antiquity illuſtrated—its relative Divinity explained—The Dignity of Agriculture maintained by the moſt eminent People in the earlieſt Times—and celebrated by the wiſeſt.

I Mean in this addreſs to recommend Agriculture as the great object of your Majeſty's attention. Antiquity ſanctifies the election. Huſbandry was the firſt temporal idea that poſſeſſed the mind of our earlieſt parents; for when the Almighty had catered for the preſent meal, and furniſhed their larder with an unſparing hand, he ordained that they ſhould hereafter earn their bread by the ſweat of their brow; indicating thereby, that ſloth was an ungrateful affection, and labour, the moſt eſſential attachment to keep the animal

animal machine in health and vigor. By this precept it muſt appear evident to every thinking perſon, uncorrupted by the vices of a city, that men were deſigned to dwell in fields; to contemplate nature; to follow her through all her works, and to aſſiſt her benign intentions.

Noah, who had proſecuted his ſtudies in the univerſity of nature, was perfectly ſkilled in the noble ſcience of huſbandry, before the ingratitude of man brought ſuch univerſal devaſtation upon the world; he found how neceſſary it was, after the waters were removed, to exerciſe thoſe talents, in forwarding the fruits of the earth, for the common maintenance of his family, and the creatures he had preſerved; as well as for the future proſpect of ſecuring wealth and power to ſuch of his poſterity who ſhould merit that pre-eminence, by toiling for it, conformable to the original precept, revealed by the great Mandator, for the inſtruction of mankind.

The ancient policy, under the immediate interference and authority of the legiſlator of nature, knew no greater diſtinction among men, than the herds of cattle they maintained, and the lands they cultivated; this land-mark of nobility continued for many ages after ſocieties were formed, and chiefs were approved, the neceſſary evils, to check the power of avarice, and of all thoſe concomitant paſſions, which force themſelves upon dominion, and opulence.

The earth was the *protocol*, or firſt legible volume, which nature unfolded for the exerciſe of the human mind; no wonder opinions prevailed under ſuch inſtruction, that all the bleſſings of this world ſprung from her prolific womb. Men were neceſſarily actuated by intereſt and gratitude to aſſiſt the labours of the earth in bringing forth her fruits, ſo eſſential to their exiſtence. And when inquiſitive ſpeculatiſts had reaſoned away the ſimplicity of

its

its original language, their aſſiduity became a moral, as well as political duty; men not only toiled in her ſervice, but they invoked Pluto, as the ruling principle of terrene œconomy, to lend his aſſiſting grace in ſo beneficial an operation. It is the wiſdom of nature to adore the nutritious elements, which furniſh us with the neceſſaries of life; it is the folly of refinement totally to diſregard them. The inhabitants bordering upon the *Mare glaciale*, give credit to this poſition; thoſe contented people being ſupplied from the bountiful ocean, place their elyſium in the abyſſes of the ſea; their *Tornſgarſuk*, or good ſpirit, with his mother, dwell in the briny caverns of the deep.

The earth was conſidered as the foſter-mother of mankind; and for theſe natural reaſons; ſhe receives us upon our firſt coming into the world; nouriſhes us whilſt we remain in it; and when we are ſummoned to retire, takes us to her boſom,

and covers our mortal part with her maternal veil. The ancients thought they could not make too much of ſo indulgent a parent. The Chriſtian ſyſtem adopts the ſame idea, but does not ſeem to entertain that lively ſenſe of the obligation.

The *earth* was one of the *deities* the ancients *ſware* by; and they placed their elyſium in the fields: nay, the old Germans truſting to the ſoil for the deſireable things of this world, believed their god *Tuiſco* to be the ſon of the earth.

The Athenians wore little graſshoppers of gold in their hair, to indicate that they were born of the earth, like thoſe inſects. And the Latins, upon the teſtimony of Ovid, faſhioned mankind, as ſculptors model them, with clay and water.

The idea of huſbandry was ſo forcibly impreſſed on the minds of the ancients, that they uſed the word *plant* metaphorically for the generation of men, ſuppoſing them formed of earth, and the firſt elements:

And

And we continue to this day the ſame word, in the ſame acceptation; we plant colonies, when we people and ſettle them.

Moſes was a friend to Agriculture, for as Philo obſerves, he prohibited the cutting down fruit trees: He expreſſly interdicted the deſtroying unripe corn, that by preſerving the nouriſhments as well as the delicacies of life, nature might not be interrupted in her generous intention of bringing her tribute unto man as well as unto princes.

That huſbandry was held in great veneration by the earlieſt people is beyond all doubt, when we recollect, that they paid divine honours to ſuch curious and induſtrious men, who made any uſeful diſcoveries for the improvement of Agriculture. The Egyptians worſhipped Iſis, under the name of Ceres, for diſcovering the uſe of corn: And Oſiris for his knowledge, and information, in planting of fruit trees. The

Egyptian god *Apis* was worſhipped by thoſe people in the ſhape of an *ox*.

Every external mark of diſtinction was alſo conferred, by the ancients, on thoſe who contributed to the great plan of huſbandry. Bacchus was painted with bull's horns, becauſe he inſtructed the conquered nations to plough with oxen; and ornamented with cluſters of grapes, for propagating the vine. And they honoured Neptune with the names of *Aſphalius* and *Gaieochus*, as the eſtabliſher and ſupporter of the earth.

In ſucceeding ages, when the human faculties expanded, and the mental powers were upon the ſtretch, gratitude, aſſiſted by ſuperſtition, enrolled thoſe extraordinary labourers, who had contributed ſo wonderfully to the public good, in the number of their divine agents; thus, by making gods of peaſants, they looked up to the huſbandman, with an awful regard, as the

firſt,

firſt, from being the moſt uſeful, man in their community.

Theſeus divided his common-wealth into three diſtinct ranks; the noblemen, the huſbandmen, and the artificers. To the nobility he committed the care of religion; the choice of magiſtrates; the teaching and diſpenſing of the laws; and the interpretation of all ſacred matters. The huſbandmen were reſpected from their uſefulneſs to the public; and the artificers were important from their numbers. He conſidered Agriculture as ſo eſſential to the good of his country, that he ſtamped upon his money the image of an ox, to excite in his people a due attention to the yoke, and the plough. Theſeus was the ſteady and invariable patron of induſtry, for the labourer never ſolicited in vain, his countenance and protection. When dead, the Athenians, in grateful memorial of his patriotick virtues, inurned his remains near the Gymnaſium, in the center of the

city, and as the afflicted found a refuge in him when living, they continued the ſame ſhelter to them under his ſepulchre; for they decreed, his tomb ſhould be a ſanctuary, to ſuch helpleſs people who were oppreſſed by the perſecution of men in power.

The ſoil was conſidered of ſuch value, that when Piety influenced the Greeks to raiſe the Tumuli over their dead heroes, to an unlimited height, Plato recommended barren places for the burial of their dead, and reſtricted their immoderate expence of ſoil, on their monumental turrets, or mounds, to the ſize of five men's labour, in five days.

Agriculture, was the favourite ſubject of the bards of old; Heſiod wrote a didacted poem, pointing out the propereſt ſeaſon for the plough, the ſeed, and the harveſt; for felling of wood, and planting of vines. And when virtue had bribed the pleaſures into the country, Theocritus celebrated the happineſs of a paſtoral life.

Homer

Homer ornamented the ſhield of Achilles with the implements of huſbandry, to remind him, that valour was not beſtowed upon him, only for the purpoſe of triumphing over cities, but that he was alſo to ſubdue habitual idleneſs, and improve the lands he was to conquer.

And further, to illuſtrate the dignity of Agriculture, from the ſame authority; in thoſe times, when wiſdom took ſome part in directing the ſtudies of men, huſbandry appears to have been the ſcience of princes. And that the moſt exalted perſonages in thoſe heroick days—when the attention was turned to the nobleſt atchievements—improved their leiſure and their talents in following the plough, and aſſiſting the efforts of nature, is not to be doubted, as Homer makes Laertes, not only plant, but manure his own land.

Your Majeſty, from the foregoing teſtimonies, will be convinced that in the earlieſt period of exiſtence, when the world

world was in the vigor of youth, Agriculture was equally the exercise of the mind and body; and that those various objects which bore a part in the great scheme of cultivation, were idolized by the wisest and best of men.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER III.

How Agriculture was attended to by the Romans, thro' every change in their Republic and Empire—The ſingular Advantages ariſing from it—That it was a favourite Science with Men of Wiſdom and Virtue.

SUCH glorious purſuits as thoſe which are ſubmitted to your Majeſty's attention, in the preceding letter, could not be put out of countenance, ſo long as men remained faithful and honeſt to themſelves; we, therefore, trace the ſame laudable attachment to induſtry, when a reverence for the gods, was a recommendation to the notice of men; when heroic virtue gave ſtrength and vigor to the Roman common-wealth; when the nerve was felt in their arm, and ſeen in their language; and liberty, the great charter

of

of nature, was the peculiar care of the ſtate. Men, who were called forth to the greateſt commands, retired to their paſtoral vocation, as ſoon as their authority expired. Cincinnatus, after ſubduing the enemies of his country, by his valour and conduct, raiſed his reputation ſtill higher, by humbling himſelf to the more moderate, yet not leſs ſignificant, employment of cultivating his own farm, which conſiſted of no more than four acres of land. The faſces were to this great and good man more ſhowy, than honourable, and the lictors only neceſſary, where vice was to be kept in awe: He ſeemed to think little of an appointment that required ſuch ſplendid trumpery to mark its pre-eminency. And Cato, the moſt auſtere man in the Roman ſenate, joined the ſcience of Agriculture, to his political inveſtigations.

Temperance and induſtry were the characteriſtical marks of the moſt illuſtrious heroes in thoſe days: Sloth and debauchery

were

were the brands which ſtigmatized their uſeleſs prodigals.

The end of the Roman wars, was the honour and advantage of the ſtate: The ſpoil of the enemy, was generally devoted to the pious purpoſe of erecting temples in thankfulneſs to the deity who gave them victory: They were monuments of gratitude and magnificence; and at once teſtified their piety, and their opulence.

The ſoldier, who deſerved well of his country, had a preſent of corn, or a piece of land, given to him in reward of his ſervices: The priſoners were decreed the common perquiſite of all, they became predial ſlaves, *adſcripti glebæ*, and annexed to the land their owner occupied.

The conſtancy of theſe people, perſevering in the nobleſt purpoſe of cultivating their land, notwithſtanding their moſt arduous endeavours were frequently diſturbed by the jealouſy of their neighbours, the infidelity of their allies, and the unſettled

temper

temper of their new ſubjects, ſhew of what importance huſbandry appeared to them; for when their thoughts were hurried from improvement to devaſtation; from the bleſſings of peace, to the deſtruction of war; Agriculture had ſtill a place in the mind, the rural occupations were the object of ſolicitude and attention: Notwithſtanding the inroad of the enemy often defeated their moſt judicious plans of operation, and the horrors of famine frequently gave an alarm to their fortitude; but as the credit of thoſe times hung upon the faith of induſtry, and public virtue, they had reſources from that induſtry, and that virtue, in which they ſo much confided.

The long war which the Romans maintained againſt the reſentment, and military abilities, of Hanibal, would have proved fatal to the common-wealth, had not their moſt zealous and faithful friend and ally, Heiro, of Sicily, furniſhed their magazines repeatedly with corn. That prince eſtabliſh-

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ed his empire in the happineſs of his people: He recommended induſtry as the only friend that could ſecure them health, and ſupply their wants; and while they continued in friendſhip with virtue, they were convinced they could not ſubſtitute a better: The fruitful ſoil of Sicily, by the foſtering care of Heiro, not only produced abundance for his own ſubjects, but was a grainery for the Romans.

The produce of the earth, is the natural revenue of every nation; it is a benevolence, or free gift from God, as the proper, and immediate maintenance of his creatures; and a thrifty management of it, ſettles the tempers of the people to an affection for their rulers: it opens a credit with foreign countries, and multiplies reſources, to ſupply every *artificial* want; it is the ſoul of commerce, and the ſinews of authority. It preſerved Rome, and ſecured Heiro in the poſſeſſion of Sicily.

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When dominion expanded itſelf over half the world, and power was diſtributed and let looſe; every man ſet a value upon his own ſervices, and claimed a recompence adequate to that partial eſtimation; diſappointment quickened their ſenſations; they felt a rotten part in the ſtate, from the corruption of their own minds: Thoſe putreſcent humours, generated a myriad of patriots, who, under the colour of liberty, degraded the dignity, and weakened the power of the ſenate, gave involuntary ſtrength to ambition, and by one great caſt for empire, overthrew freedom, and eſtabliſhed tyranny!—When this mighty revolution had inſlaved the ſpirit of the Roman people, and the fermentation of jarring principles had ſubſided, Agriculture preſerved its rank under the Deſpots.

Virgil exerted the whole force of his talents, to prove, he delighted more in huſbandry than in war; and that the ma-

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nagement of a farm was of more importance than conducting an army. The credit he was in with Auguſtus, and the reputation he acquired from his paſtoral writings, afford us ample reaſon to believe, that huſbandry was the ruling paſſion of thoſe times.

And further, when tranquility was reſtored to the empire, and the din of arms no longer worried the minds of thoſe brave, and thinking people, Agrieulture became the object of ſpeculation. In this national cauſe, appeals were lodged in the minds of the greateſt, and wiſeſt men: The deciſion was thought too momentous to be referred to the arbitration of common huſbandmen, who, by being paſſive to practical impreſſions, acquire accidental knowledge, which they cannot explain, nor do they underſtand. The moral philoſopher reaſoned upon the divine intention: The naturaliſt experimented the properties of each particular

grain, and the probability of fertilizing the earth; new diſcoveries were made, and conſiderable advantages accrued from them.

Pliny aſſerts, if you ſow wheat upon its natural ſoil, ſuch as Byſacium, a particular field in Africa, it will aggregate every year, one hundred and fifty times the original quantity ſown: Nay, he tells you that a procurator ſent the emperor Auguſtus from thence, near four hundred grains ſpringing from a ſingle one; and at another time, Nero had three hundred and ſixty ſent him from the ſame place. If from comparing the *preſent* production with the above account, we *ſhould* diſpute the veracity of Pliny, it nevertheleſs makes out *ſomething* to favour my poſition; for if Agriculture had not been an object in the firſt degree of eſtimation, the philoſopher would not have ventured his reputation, by exciting emotions in favour of it.

To

To aſſiſt ſtill more the important object of my purſuit, let us look into the ſimplicity of former times, when the dead were honoured by the living; when ſepulchres were erected over the aſhes of worthy men; or cenotaphs raiſed to their memory: Officers of the higheſt rank would, in thoſe pious days, lay the firſt turf, with gentleſt hand, over the tomb; and the friends of the defunct would repair to them every year, to offer ſacrifices to their names, calling upon their ſpirits, and ſorrowing their abſence from their families, friends, amuſements, and *buſineſs* of life. Lucian introduces a father following the exequies of his ſon, lamenting that he had left the world, unexperienced in the pleaſures of a wife, the comfort of children, and the *bleſſings* of *huſbandry*. Many pagan countries, to this day, approach very near the ſame ceremonies: Nay, the Iriſh have their *præficæ*, or ſhrieching women, to howl over the de-

ceaſed, and with the like *ethnic* lamentations, upbraid him for giving them the ſlip, and depriving them of his *corporal agency in the field*, or otherwiſe.

What remained of the ſhattered power of the Roman empire, varied according to the vices or virtues, the wiſdom or weakneſs, of ſucceeding emperors. Antoninus Pius, who adopted the apothegm of Scipio Africanus—that he had rather ſave the life of one ſubject, than deſtroy a thouſand enemies—produced the moſt perſuaſive evidence to demonſtrate that he was capable of feeling the operations of ſo illuſtrious a precept; for the hiſtorians, who blazon his character, carry the climax of his many princely virtues no higher, than that he was a great lover of huſbandry.

Pertinax, who ſucceeded to an empire impoveriſhed by the diſorders of Commodus, his predeceſſor, as the moſt effectual means to ſatisfy the minds of his

ſubjects, and to ſtrengthen his authority in their affections, enacted, that all waſte grounds in Italy, and other countries, though of the prince's demeſne, ſhould be freely given to them who would manure, and improve them; and further, to invite men to induſtry, he granted the huſbandman ten years immunity from all taxes, and ſecurity from all other trouble during his reign. By this wiſe and provident expedient, he found employment for the ſoldiers, who were become licentious from idleneſs; and by encouraging the induſtrious, raiſed the dejected ſpirits of his worthier ſubjects.

Four years after Diocleſian had retired from the toils of government, to enjoy the tranquility and eaſe of a private perſon, Gallerius warmly ſolicited him to reſume the throne; but Diocleſian, with a philoſophical indifference, ſtopt his importunities, by this ſimple, but ſignificant interrogation: "Did you ſee, Gallerius,

the *plants* raiſed with my own hands at Salona?" Could language convey a ſtronger proof, that Diocleſian was better ſatisfied with his vegetable dominion, where all his ſubjects were governed by one principle of action, and directed to the end for which they were deſigned, than with the empire he had quitted; where, from the depravity of human nature, nothing but diſappointments could be expected? Or, perhaps, Diocleſian was diſguſted to ſee men ſlaves to his humour, only becauſe he could propitiate the preſent hour; and traitors to God, becauſe they ſaw his bleſſings in reverſion.

Thus upon a curſory review of the ſtate of Agriculture, through different ages, from the earlieſt time, we find it a favourite ſcience with men of the moſt ſublime and accompliſhed virtue, in all nations: It was a relaxation from the toils of war, and the ſeverer ſtudy of epic magnificence. An attention to huſbandry is

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a compliance with the inclination of God, for the produce of the earth is interpretatively an intimation from the Almighty, to cultivate it; and by making the moſt of his bounty, we not only eſtimate its value, but manifeſt our gratitude for his paternal indulgence.

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LETTER IV.

How Agriculture ſuffered by the Pride and Ignorance of the Romiſh Church—The Vain-glory and Tyranny of the Feudal Lords—Character of Lewis XI. *of France—A Sketch of Henry* VII. *of England—The Vanity of thoſe Politicians who neglect a Buſineſs they underſtand, to attempt a Science they never can arrive at.*

LET us ſtep aſide from the heathen diſpenſation, purſue our reſearches, and look into thoſe times, when the covenant of grace had inſtructed men to be ſubſervient to reaſon, and virtue; when that emanation of divine light promiſed to give ſpirit to every action, by repreſenting to us ſuch vaſt, ſuch univerſal benefits! and had we been angels, inſtead of men, the promiſe, no doubt, would have been amply fulfilled: but mortal felicity was too valuable a property to be

diſtributed,

diſtributed, and human nature too frail, not to produce many who would ſtruggle hard for a neighbour's proportion; not conſiderately to encreaſe their happineſs, but arrogantly to break down the barrier of equality, and ſo lift themſelves above the level of mankind.

The great founder of the Chriſtian religion, partook of the divine eſſence; thoſe who ſucceeded Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, in the grand miſſion, were compoſed of groſſer materials; as thoſe men *felt* no advantages ariſing from humility and forbearance, they were unwilling to *ſee* any; they had no idea of making diſcoveries, and publiſhing any important truths of the next world; they had paſſions which had been long under reſtraint, and they as long wiſhed to indulge them; the precepts of their maſters were no longer binding, they now began to think for themſelves: They explained thoſe rebellious emotions, as effuſions of divine grace,

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and found an intereſt in gratifying them; they gave a looſe to pride, to avarice, and to every infernal importunity; they aimed at dominion, and by oppoſing the ſtrength of religion to the weakneſs of human nature, they acquired it. Theology was now the pernicious ſtudy of thoſe who ſaw the advantage ariſing from it; they ſuggeſted new ſyſtems, and deformed the old; mataphyſical ſubtilties, and unphiloſophical wonders, were impoſed upon the world, while credulity was prepared to receive the moſt monſtrous novelties! The ſimple, intelligent language of nature, yielded its perſuaſive eloquence, to the jargon of intereſted prieſts; men no longer ſaw the image of God in his own works, but were ſearching for the character of a ſupreme Being, in the poſtulatum of ſome favourite Evangeliſt!

To exalt the eccleſiaſtical ſupremacy, it was thought neceſſary to degrade the Almighty to the idea of a temporal monarch,

monarch, who ſubjected the ſouls and bodies of his creatures, to the government, or controul of ſuch men, who arrogated to themſelves the title of his miniſters; thoſe divine officers took the trouble of diſpenſing favours from their celeſtial maſter, and became the monopolizers of all his bleſſings; pardons for every offence had each its peculiar price! indulgences to ſin again, were likewiſe to be purchaſed! and diſpenſations from every obligation, whether ſacred or prophane, were objects of religious commerce! thus tranſactions, diſhonourable to God, as a bounteous, all-wiſe Being; and inſulting to man, as a rational creature, were conſecrated, by the authority of theſe pious impoſtors.

When ignorance, and ſuperſtition, ſaw ſo much power delegated to the church, and ſo many comfortable things at the diſpoſal of the pontiff, no wonder they loſt the pure worſhip of God, and introduced

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the idolatrous worſhip of man: the opulent wantoned in every exceſs of cruelty and oppreſſion, from poſſeſſing the means to unburthen their conſciences, when co-operating with divine juſtice, they became inſupportable to them! the meaner ſort indulged their leſſer villainies, having little to apprehend from the torments of another world, ſo long as their puniſhments could be moderated by penances in this.

Thoſe devotees, who were ſlaves to their intellectual abominations, they precipitated to heaven, as aſſiſtants to the Almighty, to receive petitions, and to patronize the abſurdities of thoſe who paid tribute to them! By this impoſition, ſaints were multiplied without end, and almoſt every day in the year was made holy, for the adoration of thoſe canonized proſtitutes!

Such a ſanctimonius *indulto* gave countenance to lazineſs; and the ſpiritual exactions impoſed upon labour, diſcouraged the huſbandman; he could not with that

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alacrity follow his team, while his aſſiduity and care were taxed, to ſupport in voluptuous eaſe, men who contributed ſo little to the benefit of the common-wealth. When Saint Auguſtin diſplayed the excellencies of the Chriſtians, and ſet them in oppoſition to the Jews, he exhorted them to manifeſt their ſuperior virtue by acts of exemplary charity; he hinted, in terms very intelligible, that expropriating the tythe of their goods for the relief and ſupport of the poor, would be a very acceptable offering; and if they conſented, he aſſured them the clergy would give the time, and the trouble, of decimating their property, and diſtributing their benevolence; the ſuperſtitious fears of mere mortal men, yielded to the perſuaſions of the ſaint: the church unwilling to weaken the credit of ſo divine a conceſſion, gave force to the intreaty, by liberal promiſes to the obedient, and ſevereſt puniſhments to the refractory; and never left off flat-

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tering and terrifying the poor ſouls, till they had perverted the benevolence of a voluntary donation, to the rapaciouſneſs of an abſolute demand. By this chicanery a mitre became ſuch a deſirable thing, to all thoſe who valued the revenue more than the duty or dignity of the office, that popes and princes wrangled for the induction; and—but your Majeſty knows beſt—a mitre preſerves its terms and ſtipulations even unto this hour.

They alſo counter-acted every principle of ſound policy; for thoſe men ſought to ſtrengthen themſelves, by the means which weaken every other body, or ſociety of people. They eſtabliſhed convents for the reception of idleneſs, and gained proſelytes by diſcouraging induſtry! Agriculture ſuffered a ſevere ſhock, under the influence of thoſe ſpiritual drones; the fertile ſoil of Sicily became an unprofitable deſart; and the territories, ſubject to the papal juriſdiction, were laid waſte, and

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continue to this day, a frightful evidence of the Almighty's disapprobation.

And further, in these days of superstition, when heaven had no will of its own! when the angels, and dignitaries above, in a fit of idleness, left the government of nature to the churchmen below; then the pope, like most favourite servants to great men, exercised his delegated power, with the most authoritative severity; he laid a curse upon every man's land who doubted his divine authority; and vegetation, in obedience to the interdiction of these prime ministers, left the fertile vallies, and with infinite fatigue climbed to the tops of mountains, where she had scarcely strength enough to warrant an existence.

These substitutes from the God of mercy, to exemplify the inherent qualities of their master, established the Inquisition! Nay so faithless was their administration, that they renounced the most engaging cir-

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cumſtances in the religion of Chriſt, deſpoiled it of its ineffable beauties, and left not a ſingle feature by which its primitive face could be diſtinguiſhed!

The *bulimia*, or inſatiable appetite for rule, which predominates in the Roman church, prevailed over the meekneſs of the primitive doctrine; the vicar of Jeſus Chriſt, not ſatisfied with ſubduing to his will, Potentates confounded in the miſtakes of his own propagating, but his holyneſs muſt let looſe his bulls to rouze, by arietation, the martial ſpirit of chivalry—the vanity of thoſe unpoliſhed days—to toſs and gore all who did not, with unreſerved obedience, conform to thoſe abſurdities, in which he had eſtabliſhed his dominion.

Thus theſe enemies to Chriſtianity pretended to invoke the clemency of the moſt benign Being, by acts of outrage and barbarity! The mercileſs cruſades defeated the end they propoſed by them; the miſeries

ſeries they encountered, in thoſe predatory expeditions; the diſcomfitures they ſuffered; the loſſes they ſuſtained; and, what was no leſs expreſſive, the diſ-union among themſelves, declared the Almighty's diſpleaſure. His reprehenſion was ſevere, but ſignificant; ſuperſtition was ſhook, the mental eye began to dilate, and many were convinced, that infalibility was not the portion of man.

In the depravity of human nature, hypocriſy maintains her empire; ſhe deceives the conſcientious in the affectation of virtue, and flatters the malevolent by avowing her duplicity: It is her prerogative to multiply *ſaints* and *patriots*, and thoſe *divine* characters eſtabliſh their *popularity* in her *countenance*—Cromwell has cleared up this propoſition beyond a doubt—I have attempted to explain to your Majeſty what diſorders agitated the ſtate of man, when hypocriſy uſurped the adminiſtration of the Chriſtian religion; in thoſe civil

commotions, when the paſſions were ſuborned into an alliance, to ballance the power of reaſon, philoſophy loſt her credit, and mankind her protection; hypocriſy, inſtead of ſeeking advantage from ſowing the fields with corn, ſaw a more promiſing harveſt from planting the road to heaven with briars, and forming thoſe unſhapely thorns into a labyrinth, as a decoy for her own profit, and as ſhe knew the candidate always bribes higheſt who has the leaſt pretenſion to a ſeat, conſequently the clue was reſerved to compliment thoſe who leaſt deſerved her protection.

From the fate of theſe religious miſcreants, we may infer, that God is ſatisfied when men acknowledge him in truth, and ſincerity; whether in ſimple compliance to the dictates of unrefined nature, or obſequious to the arbitrary dogmas of conceited theologiſts, various in their theory, and contradictory in their practice;

or why ſhould ſo many nations of the earth, untainted, and unconfounded by the ſophiſtry of intereſted divines, be permitted to enjoy all, perhaps more bleſſings than we can boaſt of, under the protection of the ſame Being?

This was the epocha, from which induſtry may date its revival. However aſtoniſhing it may appear to us, Potentates in thoſe unlearned days, when philoſophy was in confinement, were ſuch dupes to eccleſiaſtical authority, that, tho' they wiſhed to enſlave all mankind, they diſcovered not the leaſt inclination to looſen their own fetters! They weakened their own ſovereignty, to ſtrengthen the Pontif's! The feudal barons, mighty in thoſe times, were under the ſame infatuation! an inviſible agent locked up their ſenſes, and kept their minds in bondage! Thoſe tremendous lords, who ſhook the throne of their princes, trembled, in their turn, at a ſpiritual anathema! A fulmination from

the vatican, was more dreadful to them, than a ſtorm of thunder from the heavens! Wonderful, that thoſe very men, who behaved like bears to the lions, ſhould yield like lambs to the wolves! The leaders of that celeſtial, blood-thirſty militia, ſold charters of liberty to their vaſſals, to enable them to undertake, with formidable cruelty, thoſe ſavage, and impious invaſions! The richeſt blood in Chriſtendom attoned for the ſacrilege.

The chain that linked all Chriſtian powers, in one fatal miſtake, was now ſlackened; as the pope's intereſt in heaven grew apparently leſs, princes grew more bold; they ventured to withdraw their allegiance from him, and tho' they ſtill reſpected his character, as head of the church, yet they no longer ſtood in fear of his ſpiritual interdictions; they accepted his prayers, but would not be governed by his counſels, nor awed by his threats.

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The feudal lords, deluded by religious promiſes, had, in the pontifical juggle, ruined their own real eſtates, in ſearch of viſionary ones! The Pope deceived them with the proſpect of heavenly kingdoms, but what was infinitely more alluring, he inſured them principalities upon earth! and as diſappointment to ambition generally puts irrational creatures out of temper, thoſe knights-errant, by miſſing the poſſeſſion of one, loſt that faith which gave credit for the other; they found the Pope had led them into a wilwilderneſs, but had not, like Moſes with the children of Iſrael, conducted them to the land of promiſe. They became diſguſted with his monitories; they deſerted his banner; and by diſmiſſing old prejudices, left an opening for the approaches of truth.

As thoſe petty tyrants grew weak, induſtry gathered ſtrength, and every prince who underſtood his intereſt, connived at

the revolution; every day took a link from the chain: property was alienated to diſcharge debts, or redeem vanities; manumiſſions were ſold for temporary oſtentation, or daily ſubſiſtance; and retainers were enfranchiſed, having neither fortune to maintain, nor ſervice to employ them: men began to look up to ſovereign power for protection; and princes encouraged that confidence by grants, and immunities; the huſbandman had now hopes, not only of tilling his land, but enjoying the fruits of his induſtry. This dawn of liberty animated them to uſeful exerciſes, and new ſources of domeſtic comfort ſprung from their labour. The Germans no longer lived like ſavages, upon the wild beaſt they worried; Corn-fields, and vineyards took the place of gloomy woods, and dreary wilderneſſes; ſocial induſtry civilized mankind, and human nature began, once more, to re-aſſume its wonted diſtinction; the ariſtocracy, that rampart

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of authority, which had kept Europe ſo long in fetters, began to totter; the people grew in power with their kings, and *monarchy* gave freedom to Europe.

Monarchy is a frightful word, in the language of a free ſtate, but, however the idea may alarm the jealouſy of many, I am fully perſuaded, from the preſent emulation in commerce, and the pride of nations, monarchy is beſt calculated to maintain the ſpirit of the one, the honour and dignity of the other, and (but this is ſporting with improbabilities) could wiſdom and virtue be always united in the ſame perſon, the republican would not loſe by the innovation; for the *radii* of power being contracted, as it were, into one focus, from the circumference to the centre, acts from that collected force with more vigour than any other form of goverment whatever; but every man ſhould try this propoſition in his own mind, without conſulting the contradictious hu-

manners of ſociety: it was the reſtleſs tempers of ſociety that deſtroyed the firſt common-wealth, and entailed thoſe different degrees of ſubordination which more or leſs enſlave, or reſtrain the active powers of the ſubject to every dominion, in whatever ſpot of the earth it may be eſtabliſhed.

Princes were now tenacious of their privileges, and as they were become formidable, by the means which nature directs, they ſtruggled for prerogative; and inferior ſtates, from the ſame motive, aſſerted their rights: Sweden, long oppreſſed by the tyranny of Denmark, obtained independency; Spain, by uniting the crowns of Caſtille and Aragon, was no longer ſubordinate to the will of France: the houſe of Auſtria ſtrengthened itſelf by an alliance with the Burgundian: James Sforza, the ſon of a peaſant, uſurped the Milanois, and ruled in full ſovereignty: the family of Medicis, eſtabliſhed a dominion in Florence,

rence, by their wealth, and popular virtue: the Helvetians, with ſentiments of heroic bravery, ſtruggled for liberty, and obtained it; they threw off the Auſtrian yoke, and ſtrengthened, by their wiſdom, the power they acquired by the ſword; and their fidelity to their allies, gave them credit in all nations. Princes now dared to diſpute the canon, and preſcribe laws themſelves; juſtice began to ſhew herſelf in every ſtate; induſtry was now protected and recompenſed.

Lewis the eleventh, of France, was faſhioned to the times he lived in; thoſe exigencies, which the weakneſs of preceeding reigns had left him to encounter, forced him into ſtratagems, and wiles, diſhonourable for a great monarch, and which can only be vindicated by the tempers he was to govern; his duplicity muſt be conſidered as political wiſdom; he knew the danger of attempting to eſtabliſh his grandeur by a *coup de maitre*; raſh actions,

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are illuſtrious only when they ſucceed; he had reſtleſs neighbours to amuſe, and ambitious ſubjects to ſubdue; he was determined to be KING, and he took the ſureſt method to accompliſh his reſolution; he curbed the nobility, and unbridled the common people; the reſtraint he laid upon the firſt, gained him the affection of the latter; having great competitors to contend with, he had the more need of his ſubjects eſteem; the attention he ever paid to the freedom of Agriculture fixed it: Lewis entered into the minuteſt particulars of the police; he prohibited the exportation of corn, that his people might enjoy the abundance that was due to their labour; he puniſhed the bakers who had combined to raiſe the price of bread: thus happineſs encreaſed with their freedom; and thus, by giving liberty to his induſtrious ſubjects, he enfranchiſed himſelf, and by encreaſing their power, he augmented his own. *Huſbandry* was an auxiliary in this favourable change,

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and may be conſidered as a *collateral agent* in eſtabliſhing *his* greatneſs, and in ſecuring the *grandeur* of the *French monarchy* to his *poſterity*.

As diſeaſes in plants conduce to the health of the animal, ſo the vices of princes are ſometimes efficients which give vigor to the political body; fear, jealouſy and avarice, ſo predominant in the temper of Henry the ſeventh, of England, gave liberty to his ſubjects! Henry's title to that crown his valour preſented him with, was very diſputable, but what was wanting in juſtice, was ſupplied by ſtratagem; he had recourſe to every method which wiſdom, or artifice, could ſuggeſt, to eſtabliſh his pretenſions: his avidity for power, and his dread of loſing any part of it, impelled him to unite himſelf with the houſe of his avowed enemies by marriage, (the moſt unnatural violence humanity can conſent to) only to ſecure his regal authority, againſt attempts from that family. His

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ſuſpicion of the nobles, put him upon the expedient of emancipating the common people; to check the tyranny of the lords, was to ſtrengthen his own. He amuſed the minds of his ſubjects by employing them, either upon Agriculture, or commerce; and having a perſonal intereſt in all his actions, he ſaw his advantage in giving encouragement to both. He filled his coffers, by ſacrificing to his avarice the wealthieſt men in his kingdom, only becauſe they were ſo; he kept his nobles in perpetual dread, by his ſeverity, and the commons in hope, by his partial attachment to them; ſo that during a reign of twenty-four years, though frequently diſquieted, the Yorkiſts never could ſtrengthen their party ſo as to appear formidable to Henry, notwithſtanding their oppreſſions were manifold, and their grievances real; and with all this, abetted by a lawful prince—*as they imagined*—in the perſon of Perkin Warbeck, who appeared in arms

to

to aſſert his own natural claim, and to remove the yoke his ſubjects had put upon their own necks; and what was ſtill more promiſing, this artful impoſter was aſſiſted by a matrimonial alliance with Scotland, the friendſhip of Ireland, and the good wiſhes of ſeveral foreign powers! the reaſon is obvious, thoſe idle people, who are always the victims to proud, or ſeditious ſpirits, were not to be found in that neceſſary abundance; the bleſſings of induſtry were explained to them, by their different feelings, and the unuſual ſmiles of their wives and little ones—for plenty is ever accompanied with chearfulneſs: huſbandmen, and manufacterers, were ſatisfied with the terms on which they exiſted, and beheld, with ſatisfaction, thoſe tyrants enſlaved, who had ſo lately ſhackled them; they were no longer vaſſals to men, who abuſed the authority which the feudal tyranny had given them; nobody had a claim to their ſervice, but their country,

and

and their families, and they were amply rewarded by both. Henry found it much eaſier to win the gratitude of his plebeian ſubjects, than to ſecure the allegiance of his nobles; this aberration, in politics, proved his wiſdom; and though he was virtuous only for his own ſake, his ſubjects, nevertheleſs, profited by his hypocriſy.

Thus when induſtry was encouraged, kings were moſt powerful: paſtoral politics is the ſafeſt ſtudy for princes; every one may be in the cabinet of nature, very few in the ſecrets of government: and as truth explains itſelf, fallacy, on the contrary, requires the moſt violent, and deceitful arguments, to give it circulation. This axiom is illuſtrated by the intemperature of the preſent times; our political gentry, by not employing their talents in what they underſtand, make a moſt ridiculous figure in attempting a ſcience they can know nothing about.—Socrates walking

walking upon the bank of the *Iliſſus*, with one of his diſciples, ſtopped by chance at the ſpot from whence, as ancient fable reports, *Boreas* ran off with the nymph *Orithya*.—The young man recollecting the ſtory, and wiſhing to know Socrates' opinion of mythology, aſked him earneſtly what he thought of that legendary tale?—"My friend, "(replied the philoſopher) I can find "no leiſure for ſuch enquiries; and the "reaſon of it is, that I cannot, as yet, "in obedience to the god of Delphi, "*underſtand myſelf*. Now it appears ridi-"culous to me, to be ſearching after other "matters, while I am ignorant of this."

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER V.

Agriculture revived upon the Reformation of the Church, and the deſtruction of Feudal Tyranny—The Pride and Injuſtice of the Popes, the Ignorance of the Biſhops, and the Lewdneſs of the inferior Clergy—The miſtakes which eſtabliſhed the new Doctrine of Martin Luther.

I Have led your Majeſty, by long and heedleſs ſtrides, from the aurora, or firſt dawn of authority, to the veſper, or laſt twinkling of papal ſupremacy; to the feudal ſyſtem; and to an æra, even threatning to induſtry itſelf, which was beginning to flouriſh, upon the ruins of both.

As apoſtates, from a ſhaken, and unſetled mind, are generally moſt rigid, ſo Conſtantine, when he embraced Chriſtianity, ſeverely adhered to the diſcipline of the Latin church; that emperor was ſo bigotted

bigotted to his new credenda, that he ſent for Paphnutius, whoſe eyes Maximinus had pulled out, and kiſſed the hollows: and, as a certain worthy divine expreſſes his veneration of ſo pious an act, "made "much of the ſockets, even after the "candles were extinguiſhed." This emperor's goodneſs of heart, deceived his judgement of thoſe men, who *appeared* better than himſelf; and, from a miſtaken zeal, he gave horns to the bull, when he inveſted the Pope with temporal power: however thoſe polite churchmen, not to be backward in civility, have done juſtice to the compliment, by exerciſing their juriſprudence in the abſolute controll of ſecular, as well as eccleſiaſtical affairs; till folly, by going out of bounds, betrayed her truant diſpoſition, and loſt that credit, which ſo long maintained her temporal juriſdiction.

The inſuperable pride of the Popes, together with their averſion to œcumeni-

cal councils; the irregularities in the conclaves; the ignorance of the biſhops—who were ſo ſhamefully illiterate, in early times, that we find Alfred tranſlated many uſeful books into the Saxon tongue, which he cauſed to be read to his biſhops, and prieſts, for his people's inſtruction; and his reaſon for taking upon himſelf this trouble, was the lamentable ignorance of his clergy, not to ſay much in favour of the biſhops themſelves: "To this end I "cauſed (ſaid he) copies to be made of "my tranſlation, that they might be ſent "to certain of my biſhops, to whom they "were very needful, they not underſtand-"ing the Latin ſpeech."—And by an eccleſiaſtical capitulary of Charlemain, the biſhops were enjoined to learn the Lord's Prayer, ſo as to underſtand it! and that prince, with great difficulty, brought them to make ſome little kind of exhortation to the people! For this purpoſe ſchools were eſtabliſhed in the biſhopricks,

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and abbies, to inſtruct thoſe dignitaries in the lower duties of the church, that biſhops might not continue the moſt unlettered people in the dioceſs.—But to proceed with the cauſes of this great revolution: The immoralities of the lower clergy, and the ſhameful indecencies publicly exhibited by moſt, diſguſted all virtuous, and ſober men, and inſpired Martin Luther, a bold determined monk, to leave the cloyſter; to expoſe the fallibility of the Pope, the frailties of the cardinals, and the lewdneſs of the prieſts. His ſyſtem of morality diſcountenanced their profligacies, and ridiculed their impoſitions; and under the protection of John Frederick, elector of Saxony, a prince ſignificant in power—magnanimous when deprived of it! who was obliged to his misfortunes, for ſhewing to all poſterity, as ſublime a character as ever immortalized the greateſt hero of antiquity—Under the ſanction of this excellent prince,

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Martin's ethics were eſtabliſhed; his exemplary conduct gave perſuaſion to his precepts; a doctrine ſo appoſitely applied, could not fail of inviting converts of all ranks, and degrees; the new religion ſoon forced itſelf into the minds of princes; it ſpread over Germany; it crept into France; and aſſiſted by private reſentment, it got footing in England. Thus *un moine defroquè*, by maintaining his theſis with admirable fidelity, overthrew the papal theomachy!

When theſe giants were tumbled from the preſumptuous heights they were towering, it became as neceſſary to the authority of the prince, and the ſafety and happineſs of the ſubject, to curb the harpies of another complection; the feudal tyranny, by diſturbing the harmony between the government, and the people, appeared equally vexatious, and humiliating: thoſe lords ſought to eſtabliſh their deſpotiſm, by humbling their ſove-

reign;

reign; to reſiſt them by force, required the labour of Hercules; another kind of ſtrength was to be tried, and all princes, within the circle of Europe, ſeemed to take courage, from their mortifying ſubordination to the pride of their vaſſals, and united to undermine this arbitrary phantom; artifice, and intrigue were critically appointed, and they ſucceeded to the advantage of mankind, and themſelves.

I am, &c.

LETTER VI.

Agriculture alarmed at the Advancement of Commerce—Novelties; how they operate upon the different Paſſions of Mankind—Commerce fatal to Morality—Henry IV. *of France, and his Miniſter Sully, their Characters—A ſlight Sketch of Cardinals Richlieu and Colbert—The Portraits of Commerce and Agriculture attempted—inferences drawn from them—Agriculture how eſſential to Commerce—Lord Chancellor Verulam a Friend to Huſbandry.*

AGRICULTURE had ſcarcely felt the ſalutary effects of theſe auſpicious changes, before induſtry was alarmed by the pernicious diſcovery of the mariners compaſs: this mighty revelation, preſented us with new worlds, and new ideas! Ploughing the ocean was more thought of, than ploughing the fields! The ſimple Hind, whoſe irreſolute ſpirit dared not viſit

viſit a church yard, by moon-light, now hardened his mind againſt the frightful impreſſions of the tremendous deep! They were talked out of their fears, and out of their ſenſes too! They heard of treaſures in the womb of foreign ſoils, which they could never expect from their own: Agriculture made them happy, but did not make them rich; and wealth was to let them into ſome ſecrets they were moſt deſirous to know: therefore, no ſooner had avarice ſet up commerce as the tutelar deity of the nation, but her ſhrine was crouded with adventurers. Aſſociations were formed to animate the ſpirit of trade: monopolies were obtained, to repreſs it! all was in a flurry! and blunders muſt occur, before a ſcheme of ſuch importance can be properly digeſted.

Trade ſoon became an object of reſpect, and opened a new path, to fame, and diſtinction: foreign effeminacies were imported, and when the idol of faſhion had

fixed a criterion, for ornamenting the body, nature was no longer conſulted in embelliſhing her own works: men were more eſteemed for their fopperies than their virtues; for good clothes met with more adulation than good ſenſe! and until mankind look, as formerly, into nature for inſtruction, the coxcomb will maintain his aſcendency. Thoſe gaudy flowers which reflect ſuch colours to the eye, owe not their beauties to any outward application, but to the juices circulating, or fermenting, within them; ſo man derives no intrinſic merit from the external ornaments of his body; it is the action of the ſoul, that muſt determine the excellency of his character.

To accumulate wealth, was the emulation of the times, and luxury multiplied characters of opulence: merchants, and men in trade, roſe upon the ruin of the land-holders: property changed hands, and when rich families were preferred to

good

good ones, the haughtieſt peer thought it not beneath his dignity to court the alliance of the humbleſt mechanic! thus the higheſt blood in the kingdom, was commixed with the baſeſt; from which depravity you may date that lowlineſs of ſentiment which impoveriſhes the mind of our firſt nobility; ſoftens their affections to the impreſſion of plebeian vanities, and furniſhes the great world with ſo many unworthy repreſentations. Honour muſt loſe its ideal conſequence, when a peer of the realm demeans himſelf, by hanging upon the arm of a pick-pocket, at Newmarket, and ſquanders away his time, his fortune, and his reputation at a gaming-table. Unhappily, gaming is the favourite ſcience of this day; it is in higher credit than the mathematicks! and if Sir Iſaac Newton was now living, he muſt yield pre-eminence to the ſharper, or deſert the tables of faſhion, and—I was going to ſay—politeneſs; but I aſk

pardon,

pardon, good breeding is too delicate in the choice of company.

Commerce enriched the nation, but waſted its inhabitants: the country was drained of its moſt uſeful people, to furniſh cities and towns; London in particular tumified to an alarming ſize, by the charms of voluptuouſneſs, and the attraction of manufactories. Peaſants being familiar with health, were ignorant of the mighty bleſſing! Thoſe deluded people, with an unreluctant careleſſneſs, left the active buſineſs of the field, to encounter diſeaſes at the loom, and other ſluggiſh employments! Innocence loſt their affection, when the country loſt their aſſiſtance; and their minds, and their blood were corrupted in the ſame moment.

This deſertion from the cauſe of induſtry, encreaſes the bills of mortality; multiplies hoſpitals; furniſhes the temple of juſtice; and what is moſt melancholy, ſupplies her altar with victims! Againſt

theſe alarming truths, Commerce maintained her ground: ſhe found powerful friends in every government, and no wonder, as ſhe poured immenſe ſums into their reſpective treaſuries: *Fiſcal laws* are the political eſtates of every prince; and the paps which nouriſh the miniſterial polygarchy. Commerce, encreaſed by encouragement, grew unweildy by an injudicious indulgence; and declined, by humours of her own generating: Commerce, like other prodigals, never adverted to her conſtitution, but relied upon faithleſs auxiliaries, for ſpirit, and vigour.

Permit me, Sir, to engage your attentention for a moment, to look back upon France, at a period when ſhe was bleſſed with a King, and a miniſter, formed for each other. Henry the fourth was a prince of pleaſure, and ſentiment; Sully, an indefatigable ſtateſman, of genius and integrity: Henry never departed from thoſe royal principles, which engage the

mind

mind in the intereſt of the people; even when the rude commotions of the league for public miſchief, obliged him to take a part in his country's diſtractions; and Sully poſted himſelf the ſentinel upon his maſter's honour, to watch his actions, when nature threw him off his guard. His vigilence, and aſſiduity, filled up thoſe intervals, which the king's gaiety would ſometimes produce, that adminiſtration might not ſuffer from his levities. In ſecurer times, when leiſure called in every thought, national improvement was their uninterrupted ſtudy: Agriculture maintained her primordial rank in their minds; Agriculture was the foundation for Commerce to build upon; they ſaw to what an elevation ſhe might riſe, from ſo ſolid a baſis! and had not good policy expired with thoſe truly great men, France, in all probability, would have diſpenſed laws to the univerſe. That kingdom is ſaid to contain one hundred and forty-five millions

of

of acres: what population might be expected from ſuch a tract of country put into motion! and if the temper of the people were as generous as their ſoil, what immenſe treaſures muſt flow from the fruits of induſtry, and cultivation! But providence does not ſhew her liberality every day, in beſtowing upon kingdoms ſuch a miniſter as the duke of Sully.

Cardinal Richlieu, was like our cardinal Wolſey, or like every other prieſt in power, a miniſter for his own ambition; and Colbert, the celebrated financier to Lewis the fourteenth, would have been a great miniſter, if Lewis had been a great king: to gratify the extravagant humour of that monarch, Colbert ruined his country; he gave premiums to the manufacturer, and laid impoſts upon the huſbandman; he filled the king's purſe, but emptied thoſe of the ſubjects; vaſt ſums of money were expended upon theſe new-invented fopperies, while the moſt uſeful part of

man-

mankind, had none to purchaſe the moſt ordinary coverings; a few were fluttering in ſilks, many were half naked; the cities looked gay, but the country appeared like a deſert.

Commerce is an avowed enemy to mankind: kindoms have been plundered, laid waſte, and the inhabitants butchered, to puſh her intereſt! How much blood has been ſhed to humour her jealouſies! How many millions have periſhed in her ſervice, by endemial diſeaſes, or ſwallowed in the ocean! and how many thouſands have been flattered out of the world, by her deceitful luxuries! Commerce gives countenance to every extravagancy, by tranſmuting the vices of mankind, into relative virtues.

Agriculture received *her* appointment from the hand of nature, and, like a faithful ſervant, has conformed to the inſtructions of her great patroneſs; ſhe is a friend to mankind, ſhe ſecures him

health,

health, and appetite, and provides him food to maintain one, and gratify the other; ſhe gives ſtrength to his body, and furniſhes him with materials to cloath and preſerve it: as an attentive handmaid; ſhe dreſſes up the face of nature in lovelineſs, and feaſts the eye of man with her incomparable beauties; add to all theſe real excellencies, ſhe by reſtraining his paſſions, entails upon him long life, with the enjoyment of peace, and abundance.

From contemplating the before-mentioned portraits, I am fully perſuaded, that if Commerce had never broke in upon the integrity of mankind, we ſhould have been much happier under the mild influence of Agrarian politics, than under the domination of an endleſs code of laws, invented upon the inumerable frailties our enlarged imaginations have introduced amongſt us; every precaution which the ſecurity of trade requires, points out the evil it is intended to guarantee!—When

per-

perjury and theft were unknown in Athens, there were no edicts, rules, or law to explain, or puniſh ſuch crimes.—And it is not very favourable to the reputation of this country, to ſay with Theophraſtus, "The good need but few laws." However, as commerce, by the connivance of every ſtate, is now become ſo eſſential to the dignity of government; the ſecurity of the ſtate; and, by winning over our paſſions to her intereſt, is conſidered as a principal, in every party, thro' the walk of life: ſound policy calls upon wiſdom and œconomy to viſit the patient in her decline, to ſolicit nature to throw off her diſtempers, and perfect her recovery; the preſcription lies open for the inſtruction of thoſe, whom the partiality of fortune has qualified to apply the remedy; let them reſtore, by every effort of generoſity, a vigorous cultivation of the land they inherit; the manufacturer will then have labour at a cheaper rate; the merchant will

will be ſupplied with goods, on more reaſonable terms; your Majeſty's army will be recruited with ſoldiers, nerved for every ſervice—(for a ſtarved veteran will agree with Procopius in opinion, that courage and famine can never dwell together; it being more than nature can bear, to pine with hunger, and yet to play the part of a ſtout and vigorous man) your ſubjects will be relieved from every apprehenſion; neceſſity, like the vapours, will be no more than a mental fume, and felt only by ſuch whoſe indolence of mind, and body, brings thoſe flatulencies upon themſelves.

Huſbandry is the vital ſtream of Commerce; it circulates through every part; it is the medium that tempers the whole; the artiſan muſt be fed, and labour is valued by the liberal, or parſimonious produce of the earth; when cultivation is neglected, trade ſtagnates, and is only kept in motion by our own vanities; the

conſumption of other countries, muſt be ſupplied from a more reaſonable market. Plenty helps the ſtaple trade of this country, in another view; when proviſions are cheap, the poor are enabled to lay by ſome part of their wages, for the comfortable purpoſe of cloathing themſelves, and families—Oſtentation riſes with abundance—Wretchedneſs is the companion of ſcarcity.

Agriculture reared up her head, in England, at the acceſſion of James the firſt to the throne; that monarch paſſing from Scotland, in his way to London, was met at Godmancheſter by ſeventy teams of horſes, traced to new ploughs—How grateful moſt ſuch a ſalutation prove to a prince who juſtly eſtimates the natural wealth of his country! Indeed James manifeſted his approbation, by beſtowing upon their village ſome honorary privileges, and told them, at the ſame time, he was mightily rejoiced to ſee ſo many good huſbandmen,

in

in one town. But, poſſibly, his Majeſty loſt that generous, though ſimple, idea, the country had given birth to, in the ſhew and buſtle which Commerce exhibits in the great emporium: for the impetus of trade, is an over-match for the tame, ſober plan, of rural œconomics, and, like a torrent, ſweeps away every thought that may obtrude itſelf in favour of huſbandry. Commerce, like an undutiful child, endeavours to remove every obligation from the parent who gave her life, and the means to ſupport it.

In muſt not be forgot, in this place, that Lord Chancellor Verulam, now and then applied his wiſdom to the public good: and that the ſparks of virtue would ſometimes ſcintillate from the cloud of ſelf-intereſt. That wiſe lord adviſed King James to publiſh, among others, the following common-wealth commiſſions, in which the king's honour, and the national advantage, were patriotically conſidered:

viz. Commiſſion for the proviſion of the realm, with corn and grain, and the government of the exportation and importation thereof: and directing of public granaries, if cauſe be. Commiſſion to prevent the depopulation of towns, and houſes of huſbandry, and for nuiſances, and highways. Commiſſion for the better proceeding in the plantations of Ireland.

Yet I hope to ſee the glorious day, under the auſpices of your Majeſty, when men will be perſuaded, that the decadency of our relative trade, is imputable to an ungenerous inattention to our paſtoral intereſt; and that huſbandry and commerce may be comprehended in the ſame idea; that every unaffected patriot may encourage the union, and contribute his aſſiſtance, for the common, and mutual advantage of both.

I am, &c.

LETTER.

LETTER VII.

Agriculture declining under the gripe of Avarice—Bounty upon the Exportation of Corn, a wiſe meaſure among virtuous People—Eaſtern Plunderers, a moſt hateful Idea—Diſhoneſty the promoter of Suicide, illuſtrated in the Portraits of Integrity and Moral Turpitude; theſe Pictures, taken from the Life, ſhould be ſtudied with Attention.

WE are now entering upon the preſent ſtate of the great theatre, the dramatis perſonæ, in the political exhibition, are uncurtained to our view, and expoſed to cenſure, or applauſe, as each actor fills the part which accident has allotted him; the moſt ingenuous court of criticiſm is in our own breaſts; let us ſtudy the character we are to perform, and our impartial feelings will determine,

whether the execution equals the idea we are to repreſent.

Whoever ſuggeſted giving a bounty on the exportation of corn, was a true friend to his country; but I am afraid moſt of thoſe who concurred in the motion, had not the ſame patriotic ſpirit; they did not behold it in that extenſive, generous view, which opened upon the mind of the perſon who propoſed it: I mention my apprehenſion with more confidence, ſince that meaſure ſo obviouſly calculated for the public good, proved in the end injurious to it. The firſt agitation of this political catholicon, gave a jog to the ruling powers of Agriculture, and cultivation began to move with alacrity; vaſt abundance of all kinds of grain, flowed in upon the markets; Malt was exported to Holland in prodigious quantities; Engliſh wheat drove famine from every country! and, notwithſtanding the drain was opened, ſtill the face of plenty was ſeen

ſmiling

ſmiling in every corner of the kingdom. Our neighbours, the French, having ſo ample a market to be ſupplied from, threw every attention upon the vineyards, and manufactories; and had public virtue flouriſhed in England, we ſhould, to this day, have been the cornfacters, and the clothiers of Europe; while France, not feeling the throbs of neceſſity, would have dozed on in the ſame lifeleſs purſuits: we have let go the opportunity, and I am afraid we ſhall find this axiom true—It is eaſier to prevent a miſchief than repair it—This was too great a bleſſing for an Engliſhman to be ſatisfied long with; the farmer, tempted by avarice, advanced the price of grain above the ratio of the demands, for the different ſorts of it; the factor, unwilling that induſtry ſhould run away with all the advantage, the times ſo favourably offered, ſet a profit upon the farmer's advance; theſe people growing ſo ſuddenly into wealth, alarmed the jea-

louſy of the landholders, and they, to be upon a par with both, augmented their rents: this was the firſt ſhock—When ſoon after the commiſſaries, contracters, and pay-maſters, from the North and Weſt, together with the mighty plunderers of the Eaſt, guſhing into England with a confluence of wealth, compleated the ruin of this ſalutary ſcheme!

I do not mean, Sir, to throw an odium upon thoſe military gentlemen, who enriched themſelves with the ſpoils of the enemy; I have only in view thoſe chymical miſcreants, who extracted gold from the tears of their friends! Who, in outrage to all civility, oppreſſed the inhabitants whom nature had planted in India! Who ſeemed to think every moment thrown away, that was not marked with the moſt flagitious depredations! Who—I ſhudder while I repeat it—by a moſt unſeaſonable monopoly of the unforbidden fruits, and by other acts of power and inhumanity,

manity, too atrocious for the credit of this country to explain by an enquiry, expoſed thouſands of the unoffending natives, to periſh by famine! Their ears were deaf to the cries and groans of expiring men, women, and children! and--O infinite juſtice!--God will be deaf to theirs. The fate of theſe much injured people would excite our compaſſion, did not their pagan virtue make their death more to be envied, than the ſplendid advantages thoſe anti-chriſtian executors got by it. In the dunghill were theſe vermin hatched. Lowly bred, and lowly educated, they had no other ſentiments of honour, or ſocial honeſty, than what the Spectator has deſcribed in the deteſtable character of Inkle; they amaſſed wealth, upon the abuſe of confidence, and the ruin of that delegated truſt, they were morally, and politically bound to defend! Theſe *homines novi*, purchaſed eſtates at any price; and wretches who were not to be reſtrained

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by humanity, would not be withheld by the divine periphraſis of public virtue: they advanced the rents, to the value they paid for them: ſuch a lucrative precedent could not fail of playing the fool with the various paſſions of mankind; almoſt every gentleman of landed property in the three kingdoms, though differently affected, followed the unworthy example.

Wealth, honourably obtained, and generouſly appropriated, is a benevolence from the Almighty: it furniſhes every delight for the feaſt of life, and he who enjoys this peculiar bleſſing, never ſtirs from that delicious entertainment, 'till he is invited to a better. But the man who makes moral turpitude his agent, in the acquiſition of riches, is unprovided of the intrinſical object of his purſuit; he is deceived at his firſt ſetting out; Voluptuouſneſs flatters him with endleſs pleaſures; the promiſe exhilerates his ſpirits; he accepts the invitation, meets her with

infinite

infinite joy, but leaves her with regret and averſion: temptations are ſtill thrown in his way; he expects much, but is diſappointed in all his expectations. Thus conſtantly allured, and perpetually diſguſted, he abruptly leaves the gluttony of this world, without waiting for any recommendation to the next.

Suicide is too much encouraged in this country; but to remove the diſhonour from our own door, let it be remembered, that ſhe is known only to the wicked and ungrateful; the honeſt labourer, who ſees wealth in contentment, revels like a mote in the ſun beam, a ſtranger to thoſe duſky regions of impure delight, that temper the mind to ſuch horrid partialities: In this view I can never acknowledge any national connection ſhe has with the general character of England: like the Jews, (who murdered the vital principle of moral rectitude) ſhe is naturalized to no country: that ſhe is cloſeted with people of rank

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and faſhion, no one can diſpute, but ſhe is admitted into their company with the ſame heedleſſneſs as they admit an Almack, or a Newmarket gambler, to *kill time*, by terifying their minds with a recital of the *bets* they have *already loſt*, and the *important ſtake* depending on a *future day*.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

The Ingratitude of Avarice explained—a Paſſion the moſt unprofitable to thoſe who moſt encourage it—The Hardſhips of thoſe poor People who are compelled to be Induſtrious, deſcribed.

LUXURY and avarice ſeem to have armed one part of your Majeſty's ſubjects againſt the other, and as the ingenious arts of deceit are never more fatally practiſed, than when human creatures exerciſe them on themſelves; ſo in this, as in other civil commotions, they are reſiſting the motive that induced them to this outrage!—I will look more narrowly into the evil.

To maintain luxury, and gratify avarice, rents were advanced to a moſt enormous degree; farmers, to keep pace with their landlords, advanced the price of the land's pro-

produce, in an unreaſonable proportion: In this unpropitious change of affairs, induſtry became the dupe of opulence, for the few who ruled the markets, were the only gainers by the impoſition: the needy farmer, who has no greater intereſt than in doing juſtice to his farm, is obliged to ſend his goods to market, as his family muſt be maintained from day to day; his penury cannot reſiſt any prices that may be offered him; his corn muſt be thraſhed out, when he has money to hire labourers for that neceſſary ſervice; and his land remains untilled, until temporary aſſiſtance can be purchaſed, for which extravagant wages are exacted; thus raiſing his crops at the greateſt expence, and ſelling them at the loweſt prices, he is unprepared to reſiſt an additional tax upon his labour; he ſinks under the oppreſſive weight of an advanced rent: he is in arrears with his landlord, who being impatient under the difficulty of getting his money, removes

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the unhappy pauper from his farm, and, without allowing himſelf to feel for his diſtreſs, drives the victim from his home, and conſigns his wife and children to languiſh in a workhouſe! From this diſhoneſt treatment—diſhoneſty is not ſufficiently underſtood in the idea of a houſe-breaker, for *he* is infinitely more ignominious, who, by deſtroying the induſtrious huſbandman, robs the public of his ſervice, and can, with deliberate barbarity, deprive humanity of thoſe features which give a character to the nation!—I repeat it again, from this diſhoneſt treatment, the family, who but lately was of ſervice to the public, is now become a burthen to it: his few acres are given to a wretch, who had too many before, becauſe he will be more regular in his annual payments.

Selfiſh ideas are the *præſtigiæ* of avarice; the miſer loſes by ſuch ſolitary maxims; for doctrines eſtabliſhed in the mind, unconnected with the principles of ſociety,

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are moſt pernicious and deceitful, as no real good can ſubſiſt independant of that fellowſhip which unites mankind: It is the intereſt of us all to be humane and virtuous; our various feelings verify this axiom, which is thus elegantly explained by a modern philoſopher—"It is (ſays "he) the ſupreme Being who proclaims "aloud to the guilty, that their ſecret "crimes are detected; and gives aſſurance "to the righteous in obſcurity, that their "virtues are not without a witneſs."

Again, the extravagant Profligate, alarmed by his own wants, makes choice of wealthy tenants, that his diſtreſſes may find a temporary relief, by an anticipation of rent. But wretches like theſe are examples of reproach, rather than imitation; therefore little danger can be apprehended from them. The prodigal has ever been conſidered as an enemy to his country, and the wiſdom of the twelve tables provided a guardian to take care

of

of the perſon and eſtate of ſuch ſhameleſs citizens.

Thus rents are raiſed; proviſions advanced; and the wages of labour augmented; to the injury of the commonwealth, without any real, or ſubſtantial benefit to the landlord, the tenant, or the labourer! If the landlord receives more money, he is not the richer, as he has involuntary laid the above tax upon himſelf; for if he has a genius for calculation, he will find his prodigality is rated higher than he has provided for, in his additional revenue. Beſides, as we are generally diſpoſed to value our importance upon the ſum we annually receive, an augmentation of income will be apt to make us play a bolder game at the hazard table!—multiply the number of our miſtreſſes!—encreaſe our plagues, in the encreaſe of ſervants!—and ſurfeit ourſelves upon the addition of twenty more covers every day upon our table. Or, in the other

extreme, Avarice takes from the value of his hoarded treaſure, and diſpatches ſolicitude and ſuſpicion to invite anxiety, to be the chief gueſt in their miſerable party. The tenant is under the ſame infatuation; *his* mind expands with his fortune, and he is viſited by paſſions, that competency was a ſtranger to; or he buries the uſeleſs ſavings, wrung from every enjoyment of life. And the labourer works leſs, and lives more intemperately.

Theſe ungrateful truths open to the mind another cauſe of enquiry, how far the ſcarcity of proviſions may proceed from the waſte of them?

I am, &c.

LETTER.

LETTER IX.

The Genius and Trick of Grazing diſcriminated in the generous and parſimonious Treatment of Nature—The Voluptuouſneſs of Tradeſmen one Cauſe of the preſent Scarcity—Lamb and Veal not to be ſold as Dainties in the Markets—The Caſe of the Poor conſidered—Example expected from the ſuperior Order of Men—The Breed of Sheep, how differently managed.

AS your Majeſty can have no idea of the miſchiefs which ariſe from the many impoſitions we blindly conſent to, permit me to explain one, which owes its favour to the delight it affords, and the pleaſing diſguiſe that puts a ſtop to our ſuſpicions: Your Majeſty will be pleaſed to obſerve, there is the genius of grazing, and the trick of it; the firſt acts upon the generous and extenſive plan of ſerving

the public; the latter is narrowed to the view of private intereſt, which is found in humouring the ſenſualities of mankind. As the laſt is the evil, I will explain it.

In the counties bordering upon London, the great theatre on which every ingenious villain acts his part with ſucceſs, the farmer puts his ewes to the ram at the latter end of the ſummer, that they may force a breed of lambs at, or a little after, Chriſtmas, when the town is fulleſt, and all kinds of unſeaſonable viands are invited to the markets, by the high price which voluptuaries are eager to give for theſe pernicious delicacies! Thus, in many articles of luxury, nature is *compelled*, to ſatisfy the depraved appetites of the rich, and what is ſtill more to be lamented, to gratify the vanity of ordinary tradeſmen, who, in theſe oſtentatious times, have an emulation to equal their ſuperiors! The like inanity of mind ruined the mechanics in Edward the third's time; the

folly

folly of banquetting prevailed to that alarming exceſs, the king found it neceſſary to put a ſtop to ſo ruinous a practice: in the ſeventeenth year of his reign, he paſſed certain ordinances, forbidding men in trade to have dainty diſhes, or coſtly drinks, at their table. Upon enquiry your Majeſty will find that the character of the preſent times is bloated with the ſame diſeaſe, and requires the ſame remedy to ſtop the progreſs of it. Three-fourths of this early breed of lambs periſh by the inclemency of the ſeaſon, as alſo many of the parent ewes, not having ſtrength to ſuſtain the untimely charge; the grazier gets by the loſs, for as the mortality is general, the ſurviving one will bring him in more clear profit than if the other three had not died. What an inhuman trade! Let thoſe who know how to reſpect the unfortunate have compaſſion for the poor; they are equally comprehended in the ſcheme of providence, they have an

equal claim to the protection of mankind: It is the poor who are the greateſt ſufferers, and we ſhould not forget that the labourer, though he is inferior to us in fortune, in nature, he is equal to the proudeſt lord in the univerſe.

How abundantly would the markets have been ſupplied, if avarice had not introduced a contagion to leſſen that abundance! There will be no difficulty in checking the deſtructive practice! Lamb ſhould not be valued in the market at more than four-pence a pound: the beſt joints of veal (at certain ſeaſons) at the ſame valuation; and pigs two ſhillings: this ſelf-denying method ſo conſentaneous to good manners, would effectually anſwer the purpoſe, and the unneceſſary ſlaughter of calves and lambs would be prevented. Solon ſaid to the Athenians, "No man "ſhall kill a lamb of a year old."

Gentlemen who have nice palates, and the means to indulge them, may nurſe up

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thoſe delicacies upon their own eſtates; ſuch rarities may do honour to their rank: Vitellius may banquet; but feaſting inſults the credit, by diſcountenancing the indiſpenſible frugality, of men in buſineſs.

Moral excellency, and depravity of mind, owe their good and their evil tendency to the force of example; the lower orders of men muſt therefore look up to their ſuperiors for that inſtruction ſo eſſential to the public good; thoſe in the higher ſtations of life are to ſet a form for the conduct of the lower; and the various evils that diſgrace the integrity of this country, muſt be placed to the account of thoſe heedleſs beings, who for want of pride, I mean the elation of a noble, generous mind, are ſtrangers to the condition of their exiſtence. Whilſt the Spartan *Rhetræ* expreſly forbad the Lacedemonians to pamper their bodies by the butchers and cooks, and to fatten in private like carnivorous beaſts; the *Ephori* deſtroyed the effect of

that wiſe law by their example; their wallowing in luxury did more miſchief to the public, than the terror of the law could correct.

Theſe long and frequent digreſſions, tho' they ariſe from the ſubject of complaint, yet they almoſt lead us out of ſight of the complaint itſelf; but to bring it again in view, I will explain to your Majeſty the œconomy of diſtant counties in the management of their breed of ſheep. Theſe thrifty people, tup their ewes the beginning of November, conſequently the heighth of their lambing is the beginning of April, when the ſeaſon is generally temperate, the days are lengthened, and vegetation is put into action. From ſuch benign advantages the dams recover ſtrength every day, to nouriſh and ſupport their manifold young. From theſe counties we are fed: country-towns have their *irritamenta gulæ*, their incentives to gluttony; lambs muſt be butchered to pamper their pride, or pro-

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voke their apetites: indeed their taſte has not reached ſuch refinements in eating as to require *houſe lamb*, and that at an earlier ſeaſon: ſo they have their number, though but one-third the quantity of that kind of meat, which *Providence* annually beſtows, for general ſubſiſtence. Their conduct in this affectation of elegancy, is reprehenſible, as *her* generous intention of maintaining all, is defeated, by feaſting a few with the immature third, that is ſo greedily ſought after. Here commerce muſt alſo prefer her complaint, as ſhe ſuſtains a very conſiderable loſs, by thus diminiſhing the growth of wool, and rejecting thoſe ſubſidies, which nature ſo liberally offers for the friendſhip of mankind.

I am, &c.

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LETTER X.

Farmers having too little Liberty, and too much Land, very injurious—Confidence from the Landlord, and Judgement in the Tenant, would answer every generous Purpose—Why the Crops of Grain have not been so fruitful as the Seasons promised, accounted for—A Division of large Farms particularly recommended—The cruel and destructive Consequence of investing Farmers with too much Influence.

THE nature of our soil and climate, requires men of quick, lively, and generous tempers; lazy dispositions are diamatrically opposite to the impulse of both, and the public suffers by prejudices arising from apathy and ignorance. I will inform your Majesty, how negligently Indolence goes through her part. Many gentlemen of landed estates not knowing, and above enquiring into, the nature and pro-

property of the ſoil, are ruled by caprice, not directed by judgement; they have one idea, and can never be brought to depart from it; they have heard that nothing impoveriſhes land more than ploughing, and however vague the poſtulatum, they are ready to believe it. From this deception, they bind up all their tenants not to plough any, or if they have the liberty to plough one or two pieces, they are ſuffered to torture thoſe for forty years without intermiſſion, till the land almoſt worn out, has not ſtrength, or nature, left to nouriſh the rudiments of vegetation, conſequently the grain wants its legitimate property; the fields may be as ſhowy, but the crops often belie their appearance. When the ſame quantity of grain produces a leſs quantity of meal, the difference muſt be in the quality; that difference does not proceed from more unfavourable ſeaſons than formerly, but from injudicious reſtraints,

ſtraints, not leaving the farmer at liberty to diſplay his management.

Farmers, like ſubordinate ſtates, ſhould in ſome degree be ſubſervient to their lord, but I can never wiſh to ſee the landed gentlemen of England exerciſe a tyranny, like the Carthaginians, over their dependants: Thoſe Africans prohibited the inhabitants of Sardinia, and Corſica, from ſowing, on pain of death, that their diſtreſſes might ſecure their ſubjection to Carthage; on the contrary, I hope to ſee every labourer have his ſhare of the bread he raiſes himſelf, and enjoy every decent freedom, which morality has preſcribed for the government of mankind.

To ſeparate the tenant from the landlord, is as great a ſoleciſm in paſtoral, as to divide the ſubject from the prince, is in national, politics; the intereſt of the landlord and tenant, in the ſpirit of huſbandry, is reciprocal: if the land is neglected, both muſt ſuffer; therefore if the land-

landlord, wanting that confidence he ſhould repoſe in his tenant, forbids the neceſſary uſe of the plough, he wrongs the public, the tenant, and himſelf; for his land will grow mofſy, and unhealthful, for want of exerciſe to refreſh it, and his farm muſt ſink in its value. He may not feel it immediately, for like an inward bruiſe, the miſchief may be gathering ſome time before it makes its appearance; whereas, if a vigorous cultivation was encouraged under proper and judicious reſtrictions, eſtates would improve in their value to the induſtrious farmer, as well as to the landlord, and the encreaſe of grain would effectually remove the diſtreſs which all orders of people ſo loudly complain of. Labour would then find employment, and if every large farm, or tract of country, was divided, and put under the management of many, inſtead of being left to the ill conduct of a few, graziers would then be obliged to breed, as well as fatten,

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ſheep and cattle; every article of ſubſiſtence would then fetch its value, and the wealthy tyrant have no longer the means to lower or advance the market, as he may be inclined either to buy, or ſell.

To illuſtrate what I have hinted againſt the baneful influence of monopolizing graziers, examples are ſeen at every market in England, where lean beaſts (the property of poor graziers) always ſell at a low price, when the fat cattle are advanced to an immoderate high one—they bear no proportion to each other.

Induſtry meets with the ſame diſcouragement, in the ſmall parcels of wool their little flocks afford them: the poor man will get only twelve ſhillings a tod, when the rich grazier, who can afford to wait the turn of the markets, or compel the wool-buyers to his own terms, will get twenty ſhillings. The public is not benefited by this impoſition; as the ſmall quantity

tity the wretched have to diſpoſe of, can have no influence at Norwich, Leeds, Halliſax, &c. The wool-drivers, or owlers, are the only perſons who profit by their neceſſities.

It is owing to the egregious miſtake of ſuffering a monopoly in farms, that Idleneſs lolls in eaſe and opulence, at the expence of Induſtry, the public, and the landlord: and, like fiſh of prey, will continue this deſtructive purſuit, ſo long as the Pikes are intruſted with power not only to deſtroy the Jacks, or little ones of their own ſpecies, but even to threaten the gold and ſilver fiſh with their voracity.

Theſe princely farmers who lord it over ſuch an extent of territory, are the legiſlators of every village, and their formula's act by courteſy with as much force, as the prerogative of laws! Theſe petty tyrants, like the monſter *Caligula*, proclaim

claim a famine without ſcarcity! The abuſe of this exorbitant power is the more alarming, as the ſtatute to reſtrain that unnatural influence, is in the hands of thoſe who gave it.

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LETTER

LETTER XI.

Giving too much Land to the Miſmanagement of one Man, further conſidered, and reprobated—Luxury dangerous to the Integrity of Huſbandmen—Young Men ſhould be encouraged to Sobriety and Induſtry, by the Hopes of getting a Farm in Reward of thoſe Virtues—The conſolidating ſmall Farms deſtroys that much deſired Emulation.

THERE ſhould be no gentlemen farmers, except thoſe who manage their own eſtates; the genius of our country never meant to entertain ſuch heterogeneous characters; no man ſhould rent above three hundred pounds a year, and but very *few* of *them*; and no man, who means to act with juſtice to his landlord and the public, would wiſh it; it is employment enough for one man; a greater quantity requires more *care*, or admits of

more *neglect* than any man ſhould be *entruſted*, or *indulged* with.

The Romans, ſenſible of the waſte which too much land in the poſſeſſion of one perſon occaſioned to the public, conſidered that man as a dangerous citizen, who was not perfectly content with ſeven acres.

Solon, to prevent individuals becoming powerful from the poſſeſſion of too much land, paſſed a law, that the Athenians might not be permitted to purchaſe as much land as they pleaſed.

And when the land of Laconia was engroſſed by a few, the city of Sparta was overcharged with a multitude of neceſſitous perſons. Lycurgus availed himſelf of the great diſparity between the number afflicted by poverty, and the few who were made unweildy by too much land: to heal the inveterate ſtate of the commonwealth, he divided the whole country into equal ſhares, allowing the pre-eminence

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to virtue only, and conſidering no other difference, or in-equality, between one man and another, but what the diſgrace of doing baſe actions, or credit of doing worthily, created.

It is obvious, from the opinion of the wiſeſt men of antiquity, that too much land in the hands of one man is injurious, and I am perſuaded that a farm of three hundred a year to one tenant, would call forth all his induſtry, and all his management, to cultivate it for the advantage of himſelf; and in that advantage his landlord and the public would be comprehended. He would preſerve his health, by his labour; and his gains, by his œconomy; his four wheel, or his one-horſe, chaiſe, would be no longer neceſſary to carry the *loon* to church, or his red-fiſted drudge to a party at cards; foreign wines would be treated as ſtrangers; and the wholeſome brown bread, and brown beer, have as much credit at a farmers entertainment, as they

had in thoſe happier days, when England was envied for enjoying the bleſſings of induſtry, and abundance. But the *ton* has made its way into the complexure of rural gentility; the good old cuſtom of living as they ought to do, is proſcribed by the prodigals of the preſent day; and too many are vain enough to ſubmit to the interdiction.

If farms from forty to one hundred pounds a year, were prudentially appointed, the young and willing Hind, inured to labour, would be encouraged, from the expectation of ſharing one of the many farms ſo parcelled among the number of thoſe whoſe ſober conduct might recommend them to confidence; but having no flattering views of that kind, he becomes diſpirited, and impatient of toil; many ſell themſelves to the militia to avoid it, and are irrecoverably loſt in that School of debauchery; for the militia law has been the bane of induſtry! the perverter of

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ſimplicity! Many diſadvantages to the kingdom have been thereby purchaſed at a great expence to it* ! The moſt thinking peaſant is diſcouraged from matrimony, as he ſees no proſpect of providing for a family; and thus reflection, which ſhould bind man to an obedience of the divine and political mandate, in the preſent unnatural and alarming neglect of his common intereſt, ſerves to depopulate! Surely every generous method ſhould be purſued to encreaſe and multiply: ſome who are influenced by their paſſions, ruſh heedleſsly into thoſe endearing engagements, which encreaſe our poor, are a load upon our pariſhes, diſgrace our rural œconomy,

* Whoever caſts his eye upon the *Calendars*, at every county-aſſize, and obſerves the encreaſed number of criminals which appear there, will be convinced that ſome cauſe or other has occaſioned this ſad and melancholy alteration; and if a more rational one cannot be found, ſome credit muſt be given to what I have ventured to aſſert.

and are a check to the induſtry of all; for not having the moſt diſtant view of any comfortable change in their condition, they yield to a profligacy of manners, which retards the work of cultivation, and in the end brings ſhame upon the army, that looks for no other qualification, but youth and ſize to recommend them for the ſervice. A combination of virtuous and public ſpirited men might remove their deſpair, and give ſuch a ſpirit to induſtry, and population, that diſtreſs would be unknown in this country, and *want* become an expletive in the language of our manufacturers.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Large Sheep Walks, or Tracts of unencloſed Ground, a material Loſs to the Public, and to the Owners of them—A Plan propoſed for the Advantage of both—The Value of a good Soil oppoſed to the Mons Argentarius.

AMONG the many loſſes which the public ſuſtains, from the want of judgement in ſome, and honeſty in others, (for I muſt trace the miſtake home to the maſter, or the ſteward,) permit me to mention the abſurdity, and evil tendency of extenſive ſheep walks, which, like deſerts, afford no protection for the ſtock that is turned looſe upon them. In this unſheltered ſtate, they are of little value to the tenant, of leſs to the landlord, and a loſs to the public; for thoſe immenſe tracks require more attention than every ſhepherd

can, or *will*, give to his maſter's intereſt; they are too dreary in bleak weather, too ſultry in the Dog-days, ſo that many old ſheep, and lambs inumerable, are deſtroyed by the cold, (if the ſpring proves ſevere) or ſmothered by the drifted ſnow in winter; many are overturned by the weight of their wool, and periſh for want of aſſiſtance in that helpleſs ſtate; and many are devoured by maggots, before their ſituation *can* be diſcovered. But if theſe neglected wilds were encloſed in pieces of twenty, or thirty acres, pared, burnt, and ploughed up, what quantities of turnips to feed their ſheep! what labour to employ their poor! what crops of corn to nouriſh them! and what future paſtures to breed and maintain all kinds of cattle! Every honeſt farmer can beſt explain theſe important truths. Let the gentlemen of landed eſtates attend to this hint; their time will be well employed; they will encreaſe in opulence, and grow rich in the people's opinion;

opinion: they will be patriots in the moſt faithful meaning of the word. I ſpeak with authority, I have ſeen many ſheep-walks, in Lincolnſhire, ſo extenſive, that if divided, and incloſed, they would be improved to ſo many conſiderable farms, but in their preſent forlorn condition are of little worth, even to the tenant, when the loſs of ſheep, and loſs of time, are conſidered in the eſtimation of his farm.

To give a clearer idea of what I wiſh to recommend, ſuppoſe the downs in Suſſex were the property of one perſon; in that ſuppoſition, let the contemplative mind ſkim over that extent of country, and proportion its value, if cultivated, to what it now yields to public, or private intereſt; then ſuppoſe the proprietor, generous to himſelf, divides it into comfortable farms of two hundred acres each; ſearches out ſober, induſtrious men; grants each a leaſe for twenty-one years; exempts

them

them from rent the firſt three years; furniſhes them with materials for temporary cottages, barns, &c.—And thoſe *Decumani* who wear the livery, and like dutiful ſervants, adhere to the inſtructions, of their divine maſter, will, no doubt, aſſiſt the poor, by giving up their tythes for that time; more eſpecially when they conſider it is diſpenſing with what never exiſted, or ever would, unleſs by ſuch encouragement induſtry ſhould rouſe this dormant land into life and motion;—then the heart's-blood of the ſoil may circulate through the aorta, or vital principle of the clergy.—For the above indulgencies, the landlord obliges each farmer to encloſe his allotment in plats, from twelve to thirty acres. Now conclude what would be the advantage of ſuch a reſolution; I will not preſume to aſcertain the real improvement, but I ſhould ſuppoſe the land that does not at this time pay two ſhillings an acre, would, at the expiration of the three years, afford

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twelve or fifteen ſhillings. And from calculating the value of each man, by the price he fetches in the army, which is not his utmoſt worth, we may form ſome judgement how much the public would gain by population, and the encreaſe of produce.

A good ſoil is of more real worth to a nation, than the *Mons argentarius*; it produces gold, and multiplies mankind; whereas, ſcooping of mountains is exchanging people for ſilver. Riches ſhould be obtained by labour, that the pooreſt man might participate the effuſion; this ſingular bleſſing ariſes from it, for every difficulty the farmer encounters in the ſtruggle, is the appetite, which gives a reliſh to the enjoyment of wealth ſo honourably acquired. Theſe, with many other overſights, will be looked into one day or other; but as an excellent writer obſerves: "Men are generally ſo tenacious of their errors, that they acquieſce to truth as late as poſſible."

I am, &c.

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LETTER XIII.

Encloſing Commons upon the preſent partial inattentive Mode, of no public or private Utility—The Miſchief that followed upon encloſing Deepin Fen, explained—That every Injuſtice may be removed, is recommended, and the Advantages ariſing from Sentiment are pointed out—An Attachment to our native Soil natural—why it ſhould be encouraged—Pride a deceitful Paſſion.

BISHOP Burnet tells us, in his hiſtory of the Reformation, that the greateſt number of the proprietors of land, finding more profit in ſelling their wool than their corn, encloſed their eſtates; on which the ruſtics, ready to periſh with hunger, roſe up in arms, and inſiſted on a diviſion of their lands. The young king even wrote on the ſubject, and proclama-

tions

tions were made againſt thoſe who encloſed their land.—*Our* paſſions are in like manner unfaithfully repreſented in the Senſorium: we are at this time envenomed with the ſame poiſon.

The preſent furor of encloſing common lands is a ſort of Lycanthropy; it opens ſuch a field for avarice to wallow in, as deprives men of their natural propenſion: it deadens thoſe generous ſenſations which diſcriminate the gentleman. The ſame charity which is alarmed at the cry of a ſingle pauper, hears not the united lamentations of men, women, and children! the heart that palpitates at the diſtreſs of a common vagrant, is not moved at the ruin of many induſtrious families!

The like torpor benumbed the proprietors of the Lincolnſhire Fen, whoſe obſtinate, injudicious oppoſition to natural juſtice, drove hundreds of that deſerted neighbourhood into want, deſpair, and reſiſtance: it was like beſieging the country!

try! It was the giants warring againſt heaven!

So far as humanity may be allowed to interfere, I feel myſelf intereſted in the welfare of thoſe hapleſs people, being one of the few who ventured againſt the fury of their reſentment, when the flag of defiance was unfurled, to explain their miſtake, and adviſe them to patience. I heard their complaints and pitied them: and at the time could not but think thoſe diſtreſſed creatures might be made happy, obedient, and uſeful, by a becoming conceſſion on the part of the proprietors of that new acquired poſſeſſion; for humility in great men carries ſuch weight, that it ſinks into the hearts of the lower order of people: much miſchief, moſt aſſuredly, might have been avoided, and much advantage obtained.

But when theſe terrene lords had impetrated from the public, permiſſion to encloſe, and authority to ſhut out thoſe natives

natives from the means of ſubſiſting, they were unjuſt to themſelves, in not manifeſting their gratitude, by ſome return of kindneſs, for ſo generous an indulgence; unluckily, in the hurry of explaining away thoſe peoples claim by an act of parliament, they forgot a ſtatute, as old as nature itſelf—the law of humanity—which I hope never to ſee repealed in this country; and if generous examples were effectual in their operations, we never ſhould, ſo long as your Majeſty's beneficent temper inſtructs the minds of your ſubjects. The vices and follies of a prince are adapted to the flexuous humours of many, but his virtues are only fitted to great ſouls.—The men I have been ſpeaking of, mighty only from opulence, in the idea of ſtill adding to the heap, ſecluded thouſands from their uſual means (time immemorial) of earning a ſcanty ſubſiſtence, without any ſuccedaneous plan of providing for their neceſſities, leaving deſpair to turn the

hearts

hearts of thoſe uſeful people from their loyality and obedience, to acts of violence and miſchief.

The diſpaſſionate looker on, muſt, without any manner of doubt, pronounce it an unjuſt proceeding: and if a rich man be unjuſt, ſays Demoſthenes, it is fit that he ſhould be much more ſeverely puniſhed than a poor fellow whoſe poverty forces him to be ſo; for before judges who have a due ſenſe of humanity, neceſſity pleads ſtrongly for pardon; whereas they who in affluence and plenty do an act of injuſtice, can have no tolerable excuſe.

Whereas, if ſome generous remedy had been applied to have brought the fever of avarice, or pride, or—let the patient call the diſtemper by what name he pleaſes—to a *metabola*, or intermiſſion, that healthful interval might poſſibly have produced ſome ſentiment in favour of theſe forſaken people: they might perhaps have whiſpered to themſelves—Why ſhould we be

liberal

liberal to one man, and withdraw our protection from thouſands?—Why ſhould one man revel in abundance, while a multitude periſh for want?—Let the unhappy find a refuge in us.—Or, when ſuch people preſume to offer a petition to the Almighty, they might, in that moment of humility, be affected with the ſame grateful ſentiments as a monarch of France, who being ſurfeited, or diſguſted, with his appointments in this world, was ſoliciting of God the *gratiæ expectativæ* in the other. While he was at church, forwarding this devout buſineſs, a poor clergyman came, and told him, that after having languiſhed in priſon for a debt of fifteen hundred livres, he was again going to be arreſted for the ſame ſum, which he was abſolutely unable to pay. The king paid it inſtantly, and ſaid to him, "You "come in good time; it is fit I ſhould "have compaſſion upon the miſerable, as I "was deſiring God to have pity upon me."

If theſe ſen lords had, in like manner, ſubmitted themſelves to an audience, and communed with their own hearts, they might, in moral juſtice to themſelves, have been perſuaded to the reſolution of parcelling out that vaſt country among many, if it was only to give intereſt and humanity fair play: but—and I have Cicero's word for it—to raiſe our fortunes upon the ſpoil and ruin of other people is repugnant to the law of nature. If they could have ſeen their own felicity, in the good of their fellow creatures, they would have continued happineſs to thouſands, by ſecuring them bread, and preſerving them in the ſoil, to which they were rooted.

An attachment to our native ſoil is unaffected, it is faſhioned by wiſdom, and only fools diſſemble to alienate the affection: it is a divine principle: the Greenlander, who lives in a ſtate of nature, affirms it; when he ventures upon a long voyage, he

he always ſays he has left his ſoul at home; for as he ſuppoſes the ſoul may be ſeparated for a time, ſo the diſagreeable ſenſation he ſuffers when divided from his fruitleſs ſands—his ſmoaky hut—his train oil—his putrid fiſh, and every other wretched object of his affection, proceeds from the dereliction of the ſoul.

This natural attachment ſhould ever be encouraged; ſound policy recommends that we ſhould employ, and encourage, the natives of thoſe ſwampy regions, in the fen in which they were nurtured, otherwiſe the ſettling that unhealthy country with ſtrangers, will prove as expenſive a ſepulchre to the common-wealth, as the American plantations have been. Again, the people being ſatisfied in their minds, the ſtate would have been aſſiſted by the encreaſe of families; the produce of the land augmented for public advantage; and the landlords would have found an addition to their fortunes, and their full property ſe-

cured to them by the affection of the whole country. I think I ſee multitudes of men, women, and children, croud to meet, and invite their benefactors to their eſtates; I hear their virtues extolled by the moſt ingenuous acclamations. No—I am miſtaken—Hark!—Women curſe them aloud!—the children liſp an inarticulate execration! and the men are prepared to aſſaſſinate them, ſhould they attempt to approach their own territories! Several innocent men have been ſhot in their own houſes, only becauſe they were favoured by them! ſtacks of corn and hay fired, houſes deſtroyed, and deſolation threatned were peace and abundance, under the influence of a generous maſter, would have taken up their eternal reſidence! It is not too late—let them recall their labour and affection; reſiſtance, by compulſion, is a traitor to their natural inclinations: Xenophon explained the privilege of human miſery to the Sinopenſes; "Where-

"ever

"ever we come (ſaid that great man) and "have not the freedom of a market, whe-"ther in a Barbarian or Grecian country, "we take what we have occaſion for, not "out of inſolence but neceſſity."—Let ſubmiſſion fall from the compelling powers, the motive will be amiable, and the end anſwerable to the motive; but above all things, let them remember, that to be ſtarved is a cruel, lingering death—to be hanged, is to be relieved from it—This is the argument of every poor man who is tormented with a ſenſe of feeling.

I am aware that to humble ourſelves to thoſe beneath us, is too ſublime a virtue for pride to aſpire to; Pride is ever ſo meanly tenacious of her own opinion, that ſhe revolts at moral excellency, and by affectation, degrades the dignity of human nature, and interrupts the deſign of the Almighty in his perfection of it. It is the ſubmiſſion we exact from our inferiors, that makes us loſe ſight of our

own dependance; but we ought to remember, that every man bleſſed with an eſtate is a fiduciary to God, that he holds his fortune in truſt for the benefit of his fellow-creatures, and if he oppreſſes them, he is guilty of a more criminal reſiſtance, than thoſe poor wretches, who ſtruggle for the preſervation of their lives. This is a doctrine hitherto unpractiſed, but let thoſe monopolizers of the Fen, invite public virtue to a ſhare in their private councils, and they will experience the benefit of it; their improvements will then be conducted with every honeſt advantage, and public approbation would eſtabliſh an intereſt in the country; and what is more ſatisfactory, an intereſt in themſelves, which rapacious tempers will never underſtand, and can never enjoy.

The many bills for encloſing common fields, intended by the legiſlator for public benefit, have, by an unlucky inattention, proved the reverſe; if any future petition

petition ſhould be preſented, it will be conſiderate to have a report made to the houſe, what quantity of the common was arable, that the excluſive proprietors may be obliged to plough up a certain proportion, laying the tenants under particular reſtrictions, as it is not to be diſputed but lands that were worth ſowing when in an open field, may be greatly aſſiſted, and muſt produce amazing crops when encloſed. Under ſuch conditions the poor would find work ſufficient to keep them in conſtant employ, and greater plenty of food to purchaſe from their labour, which would be ſome conſideration for the little advantage they loſt, by being ſhut out from the common-field. Paſture lands are of little help to the labourer, a corn country is the ſeat of induſtry and population.

I am, &c.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

Lands cultivated in America, politically conſidered—What Dominion may be attained —what Wealth acquired—and what an encreaſe of Naval Power is to be obtained from ſuch an Attention—Sentiments of Liberality recommended.

THE lands ſo liberally granted in America ſhould be cultivated, that the inhabitants might be employed, and the mother country ſupplied from their induſtry; what magazines of corn might we hope to ſee from ſuch reſources! Our home conſumption amply provided for, and commerce again revive in her once favourite object. What a ſupply of excellent butter and cheeſe would the iſlands in the Weſt Indies receive from her dairies; beſides beef from her paſtures!

paſtures! What an encreaſe of people! What towns and villages would riſe to ſecure our ſettlements, and to awe our enemies in the weſtern world! and by ſetling the back country, what a trade would be opened with the Indians! What new regions would be explored to encreaſe that trade! Our navy would gather ſtrength by an additional number of ſeamen: our ſhipping be multiplied; and the credit of that country have a quick circulation, by opening this vien of commerce, in a conſtant remittance to the merchants here, for the variety of commodities they would require from hence. As the Americans grew rich, their wants would be augmented, and England *muſt* be the market to furniſh them with vanities: our manufactories would flouriſh, and our artificers be maintained by their own labour, and no longer wound the ears of the compaſſionate, with the afflicting ſtory of their diſtreſſes.

Per-

Perhaps your Majeſty will be alarmed for your faithful ſubjects in Ireland. I have too great a reſpect for that part of your Majeſty's dominions, to exclude them from a child's proportion of every national advantage: the Iriſh not having ſo good a market for their beef and butter, would turn their thoughts to a more profitable cultivation, which would employ their poor at home, and ſtop their emigrating to foreign countries. When I was in Dublin, eighteen years ago, an ingenious calculator told me, that thirty thouſand ſouls left Ireland every year, in ſearch of labour, and twenty thouſand only returned. What a waſte of people! a conſumption more to be lamented as it weakens *our* body-politic, and ſtrengthens our enemies, as the Brigades in a neighbouring kingdom demonſtrate. Not to mention all the miſchiefs attendant upon want of employment, your Majeſty ſhould know that leiſure makes every cobler a politician—

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We ſhould have no Liberty-tree in America, or White Boys in Ireland, if idleneſs had not left a vacuum in the minds of thoſe miſtaken people.

Every ſubject, however remote, clings to your Majeſty for ſhelter: the idea of paternal protection then, ſhould be diffuſe and generous; it ſhould expand to the utmoſt ſtretch of your Majeſty's dominions; an extenſive imagination is adapted to the magnificence of your character; the vaſt Atlantic ſhould no more intercept your benign influence, than the *Tweed*, or the *Briſtol Channel*; the aſcendency of princes ſhould be known in all nations—Liberality ſhould repreſent your Majeſty every where—Excuſe the admonitory inſinuation; I am an advocate for my fellow-creatures, and wiſh to ſee mankind as happy as their beſt endeavours can make them, in whatever climate they may labour.

Socrates

Socrates being aſked of what country he was, did not reply, "of Athens," but ſaid—He was "a citizen of the world"—How liberal the ſentiment! How generous his affections! he was in friendſhip with virtue, and all good men had an equal claim to his attachment—Although I have no relative pretenſions to claſs myſelf with men of ſuch exalted virtue, yet ſuffer me to attempt, as far as my feeble efforts will admit, that line of perfection, ſet before us by ſo illuſtrious an example; permit me to adopt the philanthropy of Socrates, and, in imitation of his beneficence, call myſelf a citizen of the world, and invoke the protection of the univerſe: indeed I have no local prejudices, it is not *this*, or *that* accent I am partial to, it is the ſentiment that determines the character: I ſet no particular value upon the colour of the face; the complection of the mind fixes the eſtimation; if a jewel has

has luſtre it matters not, with me, whether it was ripened to that perfection in the Highlands of Scotland, or in the mines of Potozi: a pebble, or a diamond, is diſtinguiſhed only by the name, and and eſtimated by opinion; Montezuma admired the firſt, Cortes knew the value of the latter: It is the drawing, the colouring, the compoſition and expreſſion of a picture which I admire, and not the ſchool that produced it: an honeſt judgement will be equally aſtoniſhed at the fire and ſpirit of a horſe, without regarding whether it was executed by Stubbs, or Protogenes.—I am very well convinced that Temperance is to be found in Germany: Humanity in Portugal: Induſtry in Spain: Fidelity in France: Politeneſs in Holland: Diſcretion in Ireland: Temper in Wales: Loyalty in Scotland: Gratitude in America: Patriotiſm in England: and Friendſhip every where, notwithſtanding Malevolence has cha-

characteriſtically endeavoured to divert me from that expectation. Enough—I am complimenting myſelf, where I aimed to compliment mankind, with my aſſiduity and aſſiſtance.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

Why the Uſe of Steers in Waining and Ploughing ſhould be promoted, and the Breed of Horſes diſcouraged—Sumptuary Laws neceſſary to reclaim the Manners of our Youth.

IT has been a puzzling propoſition to many, why the price of butchers meat ſhould advance with the price of bread! for, ſay they, if the high price of bread proceeds from a leſs quantity of corn being ſown, butchers meat would neceſſarily fall, from the arable land being laid down with ſeeds for the maintenance of cattle. But when they conſider the unthrifty breed of horſes ſo neceſſary to furniſh the multiplicity of poſt chaiſes, the miſchievous encreaſe of ſtage coaches, the extravagant number of private ones, the vanity of young men of fortune, who muſt

muſt have their ſtudd, the impudence of young men of no fortune, who will have their gelding, together with demands from abroad—the difficulty of reſolving the cauſe muſt vaniſh, as they clearly ſee that the paſtures which formerly fed ſuch herds of beaſts, and flocks of ſheep, are now appropriated for the run of brood mares and colts, and that the quantity of oats ſo neceſſary to ſupply the conſumption of this monſtrous encreaſe of horſes, interferes with the growth of other grain, allotted for the conſumption of men.

Subſtituting horſes for ſteers in ploughing, and waining, is a material loſs to the public in the article of meat, for it is well known oxen ſpread, and encreaſe conſiderably in weight, from labour; beſides, they get into fleſh with more eaſe, and leſs expence, by feeding kinder. Not many months ago, I was much pleaſed to ſee an heavy laden waggon paſs thro' Turnham Green, in its way to Hereford-

ſhire,

ſhire, drawn by ſix oxen, with one horſe only as a leader: if my family could have ſpared ſo much of my fortune, I would have franked the owner thro' every toll-bar he ſhould ever paſs with ſo acceptable a team.

To diminiſh the evil we complain of, let us diſcourage the breed of thoſe horſes which neither give reputation to our country, nor are of general uſe; and to convince us that judgement has had ſomething to do in the reformation of this abuſe, let breeding of fine horſes continue the *amuſement* of gentlemen; the breeding of draught horſes the *buſineſs* of graziers.

If additional impoſts may be propoſed, without giving too great an alarm, a very heavy tax ſhould be laid upon every horſe ſent out of the kingdom.—In the Anglo-Saxon time, the exportation of horſes was prohibited, as appears by a law of Athelſtan—"No man ſhall ſend

"any horſes over-ſea, but ſuch as ſhall "be preſents." Alſo a duty upon every horſe ſold for upwards of twenty guineas; this method would probably have its effect, by depreſſing the pernicious ambition of breeding blood horſes: but ſhould the diſorder ſtill rage, in ſpight of this remedy to abate it, the money ariſing by this duty might, by encreaſing the revenue, lighten the weight of ſome more unweildy tax.

Within the plan of leſſening the breed of horſes, ſome regulation ſhould take place to keep within bounds the licentiouſneſs of ſtage-coachmen, who, upon their preſent unreſtrained liberty of loading their coaches as they pleaſe, counteract the many laws contrived for the preſervation of the roads; beſides, many lives are loſt, and many valuable people rendered uſeleſs to themſelves, and families, by broken limbs; from the number of accidents which happen within the

year,

year, from thoſe over-loaded carriages; and the number of idle profligates they croud on the box, the roof, and behind, is a nuiſance to every ſober perſon who travels upon, or lives by, the road they paſs, as their ears are ſure to be aſſaulted by the moſt vulgar, and indecent jeſts. Add to theſe offences the number of horſes that are deſtroyed by the avidity of the owners, and the cruelty of their ſervants.

James the firſt was too much of a merchant to allow ſumptuary laws to operate againſt the oſtentation of trade, while he had influence with his faithful commons to repeal them; but ſurely the morals of young people, particularly, ſhould be taken care of, and the extravagancy of unthinking men be under ſome decorum, if it was only to diſcountenance ſo dangerous an example. The abſurd gaiety of the preſent times, I could wiſh was moderated by ſome means or other. Apprentices, in the opinion of good ſenſe,

ſhould be only as upper ſervants in the ſhop, or warehouſe, as the wiſe conduct of former days appointed them, and wear the apron, or any other ſymbol of their different occupations; but now every apprentice boy, unmindful of his relative conſequence, affects the appearance of an idle fellow, and ſquanders away his maſter's time, in diſguiſing the moſt reſpectable character; and maſters in general are become ſuch coxcombs themſelves, they connive at the loſs, rather than put their own folly out of countenance. The liberties which youth now take, are very alarming to integrity; every honeſt man muſt ſhudder to ſee a boy, before he is let looſe from his indentures, gallanting his laſs, on a Sunday, in a one-horſe chaiſe, or a phaeton, to Richmond, or ſome other neighbouring place of reſort: or rioting away the ſabbath with equeſtrian heroes of his own claſs, dreſſed in the expenſive foppery of the times! What

con-

confidence can be placed in ſuch ſervants? Our national credit ſuffers from the follies, and indiſcretions our young men are indulged in; we ſhould copy the examples of the wiſeſt ſtates of antiquity, who placed their greateſt ſecurity in the uncorrupted virtue of their youth.

What falls in with my preſent plan I will point out. If minors were not permitted to keep, or hire horſes without a written licence from their parents, guardians, or maſters, much miſchief would be obviated; ſtudents, at both univerſities, would attend more to their learning; clerks and apprentices to their profeſſion, or buſineſs; and the demand for horſes being ſo much taken off, hay and corn would neceſſarily ſink in their price, and draught cattle be maintained at a leſs expence. From this reſtriction, trade would derive moſt notable advantages; the application of our youth would give it credit; and lowering the markets would

quicken that ancient ſpirit which gave perception and energy to commerce.

While I point out many reſources from which abundance may flow into this country, I have my eye upon the danger that may attend lowering the produce of the earth, beneath the value of labour. My mind has taken the alarm, at being told, that Julian's reducing the price of proviſions, at Antioch, was the cauſe of a moſt terrible famine. And in the ninth year of Edward the ſecond, the ſame calamity befell this kingdom, from the ſame cauſe. There is a medium which if ſeriouſly attended to will remove every apprehenſion from every efficiency. Labour, at this time, is too highly rated. My ſcheme only urges that plenty ſhould proportion its value; at the ſame time my moſt ardent wiſh is to ſee induſtry encouraged, not depreſſed: it is therefore, I look with diſapprobation upon all mechanical improvements which interfere with the laborious

oc-

occupations of men; the ingenuity may be admirable, but the contrivance is deceitful; a machine artfully conſtructed may be profitable to individuals, but ſociety muſt ſuffer from it, as a complication of wheels may do the work of many families. The momentous tranſactions of life ſhould be regulated by ſentiments of generoſity; and as abundance, operating with gratitude, enlarges the mind, I would recommend a trial of every expedient to ſecure plenty in the land, if it was only to inveſtigate its operations—I will pledge my life upon the ſucceſs of the experiment.

I am, &c.

LETTER.

LETTER XVI.

The Importance of the Poor, and their natural Dignity maintained, in an Eſtimate of Man.

I Have led your Majeſty through a long and devious track, and however the fatigue may be deceived, by ſtrewing the way with flowerets, culled from the hedge-rows as I ſauntered on, it is at beſt but rough, and uncomfortable travelling over ploughed lands; and to ſay the truth, I have had as little compaſſion on your Majeſty, as the opiniative citizen has on his Sunday viſitor, when, with ardent impatience, he drags him through his *unfractuous*, *virmiculated* walks, dwells tediouſly upon the prettyneſs of his *ſhrubbery*, his *verdant mounts*, his *rills*, his *fountains*, and every other *improvement* in his country villa; when perhaps his friend has ſo much of the *natural* about him,

him, he can only ſee *beauty* in *rocks! cataracts! lakes! black-embowering woods!* and ſuch *magnificent, horrid* objects, as would frighten a *brocaded-brained* mercer out of his ſenſes!

If the plan of my deſign ſhould fall under the ſame predicament, and be ſlighted by ſublimer wits; I can ſay with my honeſt common-council man, I have been trifling to pleaſe myſelf, and to amuſe ſuch, whoſe ſimilarity of taſte, may give them a reliſh for my fantaſtical conceits.

Doubts ſuch as theſe may in ſome meaſure ſtartle and perplex my arrogance, but they ſhall not diſcourage me from detaining your Majeſty to the end of this rural expedition. The harveſt of my toil is the public good: your Majeſty has repeatedly aſſured us, you have no other; I ſhall therefore engage your aſſiſtance till I have houſed my corn; till I have brought home the produce of my endeavours, not to be kept in my grainery, to gratify myſelf

myſelf alone, but to be threſhed out for the common benefit of mankind.

I am more ſolicitous to aſſociate your Majeſty a party in my favourite purpoſe, as a royal harveſter will give *grace* to induſtry, and *faſhion* to the labourer: from that prevailing idea, we may hope to ſee our men of fortune pry into the ſoil. Men, of the moſt elegant taſte, are by nature peaſants, but are too refined to avow it; they will build palaces for the vanities of life, but erect cottages in their gardens for the pleaſures of it. And Socrates thought it a reproach for a man to be converſant in the geography of foreign countries, and be ignorant of the properties of his native element.—Men of the firſt quality may, in time, adopt the ſentiments of the firſt in wiſdom, who thought it not beneath the gentleman, to exerciſe his abilities towards the ſupplying of his own wants, or the neceſſities of others. Admoniſhed by wiſdom

they

they *will*, no doubt, exert their *oratory* powers, and reſtore Agriculture to its ancient dignity; by becoming huſbandmen themſelves, they will be taught to reſpect the character; congenial love will beam its divine effluence upon the induſtrious poor, from the part they are obſerved to take in the favourite novelty: then pride will be a ſtranger on the plains, and ſupercilious ignorance no longer detrude the guileleſs peaſant, beneath the order of human beings.

To protect the poor is a phyſical affection; it is nature; for nature extends *her* care to the meaneſt production.

To ſympathize with the poor, is a moral excellency. "To be religious and "good-natured (ſays Philo) are qualities "of the very ſame kind; and where-ever "you meet with piety towards God, you "will always find juſtice, and humanity, "towards men."

To

To be guardian to the poor, implies nobility, diſtinction. The ſenators of Rome were called Patricians, to ſignify that the rich and great ſhould extend their paternal care to all thoſe in an humble ſtation; and that the common people ſhould neither fear, nor envy the power of their ſuperiors, but love and reſpect them as their fathers, and chearfully apply to them for aſſiſtance.

Is it not moſt aſtoniſhing that ſo many ſhould loſe their way in the high road of life, when the beaten track lies ſo conſpicuouſly before them? Their miſtakes, how very abſurd! how contemptible! Can any thing be more vain, and diſguſting, than that a creature ſhould be diſtinguiſhed in the works of nature, only becauſe he can produce a teſtimony, authenticated by ſome deceitful genealogiſt, that he is deſcended from a Norman plunderer, who, with hoſtile violence, pilliged our Saxon progenitors? When, without

without fatiguing his mind in ſuch imperfect reſearches, or defiling the ſtream with ſuch a polluted ſpring, he might go much farther back, and trace the common anceſtry of mankind to an earlier epoch. But if antiquity is to impreſs the ſtamp of quality, it is the only inſtance where an old faſhion is ſo right honourably cheriſhed: beſides, to maintain ſo important an action upon ſuch *level* ground, is giving a very unuſual advantage to the humbleſt vaſſal; for upon their own principle, the labourer that plaſhes the quickſet, has a diſputable claim with the lord who employs him; and we join iſſue to that involuntary conceſſion, as *they* are alike deſcended from the ſame divine original.

The oldeſt, and moſt illuſtrious, families the world could ever boaſt of, had no armorial abſurdities; no golden lion, no ſilver fields, to diſtinguiſh their greatneſs; their ſhield was the heavens, and

their

their blazonry was to be explained in the earth they had improved.

To advance the dignity of human nature, every man, in what condition of fortune ſoever, ſhould contemplate the relation he bears to the great Author of his exiſtence; but ſuch who conſider themſelves as partially diſtinguiſhed by the bounty of providence, ſhould be full of the vaſt idea, and never diſcredit the adoption, by an undutiful inattention to his fellow-creatures.—Should accident put us in poſſeſſion of Potozi, or the mines of Peru, thoſe *concaves* of wealth, can make us *great*, only as they *magnify* our *virtues*.

Opulence in a good man, like the *gloria*, or circle of light, around the head of a ſaint, diffuſes a benificent gleam upon the faces of thoſe who ſurround him, and diſcriminates the divinity of his character.

This, may it pleaſe your Majeſty, is my eſtimate of man.—If any unſcientific block-

blockhead, ignorant of the Almighty ſtructure, ſhould ſuſpect my integrity, and accuſe me of putting too *high* a value upon the *lower* materials; let the Scioliſt purſue his vanities, ſeparate the *capital* members from the proud column, and try how it will be ſupported without the aſſiſtance of the *baſe*.—Remove the *architrave* and *frize* from an *entablature*, what a forlorn appearance the *cornice* would make without them.

The common people *are* the ſtrength of every ſtate; the nobleſſe SHOULD be the ornament.

I am, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

The Nerves and Sinews of a great King exhibited—A Plan of Reformation propoſed to his Majeſty—Ingratitude the inherent Quality of baſe Minds—The Abuſe of deceitful Influence, how dangerous.

SIR!

AS ſovereign, you repreſent the Majeſty of the conſtitution! You are acknowledged ſupreme in every department of the ſtate! You are reſpected in the court of ordinary as head of the church! Navigation courts the wind at your command! By your authority the legions are in motion; and the law conſiders you as the protector of your people! —What a magnificient idea!—It challenges from your Majeſty the exertion of every public and private virtue to maintain its conſtitutional ſplendor.

Hercules

Hercules was extolled by the ancients for having, to the honour of human nature, freed the earth from the moſt enormous evils and oppreſſions.—And Valerius Maximus pays the moſt ſignificant compliment to Theſeus, when he tells us, that mighty hero ſubdued every thing that was monſtrous, or wicked, by the bravery of his mind, or ſtrength of his body.—Your Majeſty's virtues are equal to the moſt arduous attempt, and we have monſters of our own, to match thoſe of Egypt or Greece.

What is to be done? Open a way for truth, and every difficulty is removed. The faſhionable vices of the preſent times *outglare* the diſtreſſes of virtue; and outclamour her complaints. They multiply vagrants of an higher claſs, and make begging courtly!

Here ingenuous truth could render the moſt grateful ſervices, by unmaſking their battery; the diſcovery of ſuch traitors to

moral rectitude would ſave your Majeſty's money, and the nation's credit.—But, unfortunately, princes, like planets, are ſurrounded by halos, or luminous circles, concentrical to one another from the ſame dependence; the annulus of one is blue; of another green; and the third red: ſuch glare of colouring ſo contracts the intellectual pupil, that ſhould the deep ſhade of affliction lour behind the tear which the warmth of compaſſion exhales from the ſoul of majeſty, the iris may be permitted to bend to the reſplendent drop; it is the gayeſt livery of grief, and allures the attention of thoſe who ſee no other. Objects of a ſublimer hue weep unregarded. Vulgar ſorrow has her peculiar tints, but they are beauties which are only underſtood by nature herſelf. Your Majeſty's feelings require not the force of mathematical reaſoning to explain the fidelity of this implication.

When

When England was the ſchool of morality, the bordering nations flocked hither to be inſtructed in the interpretation of virtue. Religion, in thoſe days, was unacquainted with hypocriſy, and the ſervice of God was not confined to the knees. The Druids, as the moſt virtuous men, were choſen the expoſitors of the unextended code; if any crimes were perpetrated, any unjuſt obtruſion upon the bounds of an eſtate, or upon the rights of the poor, thoſe ſages were the only judges to examine, and determine the cauſe; they would, according to their judgement, decree rewards and puniſhments, and the culprit who would not abide by their ſentence, was excommunicated, and interdicted from their ſacrifices and ſolemn feaſts; a puniſhment the more ſevere, for they who were thus excommunicated being reckoned amongſt the vileſt, and moſt notoriouſly wicked, were

carefully ſhunned, like a dangerous infection, by every one.

If your Majeſty was to eſtabliſh a tribunal in your own breaſt, and, like the Druids, expel ſuch monſters your court, whoſe reprehenſible conduct muſt diminiſh the grandeur of it; from ſuch a revulſion the drawing room at Saint James' might perhaps grow thin, and decline for a time, but when the peccant humours were entirely diſcharged, it would recover its conſtitutional elegance, and ſhine out with redoubled ſplendor.—Good breeding would, in ſuch a change, be only ſeen in the doctrine of good manners.

Begin a reformation—let not a beggar of quality diſgrace the drawing room; expell them your royal preſence; but ſhould the taſk be irkſome, and uneaſy to you, give them a penſion, and they will ſave you the trouble; ſupply their wants, maintain their extravagancies, and you erect a battery againſt yourſelf: their ingratitude

gratitude will be a comment on your Majeſty's munificence.

Men who enjoy ſinecures, or penſions, like the Mendicant friars, eat without working; they are the drones of the hive, and ſhould be expelled the republic, leſt ſuch a criminal example ſhould infect the ſwarm, and make them as ſlothful, and as uſeleſs as themſelves.—Lewis the eleventh of France, did not look upon any perſon as a gentleman, or even as a citizen, who was uſeleſs to ſociety.

If reptiles like theſe are encouraged, they will gather ſtrength with their encreaſe, they will multiply into power, and eſtabliſh a grievance beyond the influence of government to redreſs; they will lacerate the boſom that warmed them into being; they will renounce the friendſhip they have no further occaſion for; and from ſecuring the public voice, by their reſiſtance, they will be an overmatch, even for the language of truth

itſelf!—When idleneſs was ſanctified by the Roman church, William de St. Amour wrote a book called *De periculis noviſſimorum temporum*, in which he proved, by the authority of the Holy Scriptures, that men were commanded, by the ſacred law, to earn their livelihood by labour; but notwithſtanding this work was approved by men of ſenſe and learning, as conſonant to the divine inſtruction, the churchmen had *impoſed* themſelves into ſuch power that the words of beneficed, over-weening prieſts, were in ſo much more credit than the word of God, that this book was condemned and burnt: *Non propter hæreſim quam continerit, ſed, quia contra religioſos ſeditionem et ſcandalum concitabat.*

I am, &c.

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

A Board or Great Council of Agriculture, recommended as the only Eſtabliſhment to arrive at the true State of national Opulence, and national Diſtreſs—The Newſpapers deſcribed—The Progreſs of an unfeeling Heart—The Council Chambers of the Antients—The Mind how enlightened and inſtructed by Truth.

WHAT then is Truth? Whence comes ſhe? Truth is an embaſſadreſs from the higheſt power, and requires a perſon of rank and addreſs ſuperior to Sir Charles Cotterel's, to introduce this *foreign* miniſter to your Majeſty.

Where is Truth to be found? Not in the public prints; Vice and Virtue find there an equal advocate: Bolland was defended, and Lord Dartmouth reprobated, in the ſame paper! *Freedom*, the genius

of this country, ſhould be as chaſte as a guardian angel, and ſhould not, by criminal indulgence, encourage the preſs—her darling child—in all the *indecent liberties* of a common proſtitute, leſt her blandiſhments ſhould become terms of reproach, and her cenſures be conſidered as the note of civility.

The news-papers, at this time, are the precurſors of confuſion; they are the vehicles of deceit; and your Majeſty can no more judge of the ſtate of your kingdom, from their information, than of the ſtate of the weather, from a ſheet almanack! One paragraph tells you, that the Lord Mayor is an *upright* magiſtrate; the next aſſures you that his lordſhip is a *downright* ****; the worſt word in their mouth is too good for him! The adultreſs, *if ſhe has intereſt*, is vindicated, and the much-injured huſband, *if he has none*, made a party in the crime! Men are robbed of their good name in one paper, and are abuſed for

puniſh-

puniſhing the culprit in another! and ſuch indeterminate confidence is placed to mankind, by our news-writers, that *they* are only fit to be truſted with an office, who are by the *nominee* thought unworthy of employment! Nay, they inſinuated that a powerful and perſuaſive orator, opened the lachrymary ſluices of his auditors at one place, and ſtrained their riſible muſcles in another; that is, he broke their hearts at Briſtol, and ſplit their ſides in the Houſe of Commons, upon the *chearful* or *melancholy* ſubject of America! Diſſipation invites you to the moſt expenſive amuſements in one place; ſeveral unhappy families, periſhing for want, ſolicit your relief in another! Maſquerades and charity ſermons equally attract the eye, but not the attention! and, we are flattered at one time with the promiſe of vaſt crops of every kind of grain; at another, vegetation is an impoſter, and the friendſhip ſhe pretended, exiſted only in appearance.

In

In this political labyrinth, every circumſtance of information is intricated by the moſt improbable ſuggeſtions; the moſt unnatural inſinuations; and the moſt palpable contradictions. Permit me, Sir, ſo far as relates to my immediate deſign, to open a paſſage to the altar of truth, that when diſcovered, ſuffer me to hope, your Majeſty will ſurround the ſhrine with a temple of your own conſecrating; be yourſelf the high prieſt; purify the temple by ſacrificing to the juſt reſentments of your people thoſe *anthropophagi*, who prey upon their own ſpecies: ſuch expiatory rites will be the moſt acceptable to the God of mercy, and the tears of repentant ſinners the moſt grateful luſtration a prince can offer.

Let the temple be dedicated to induſtry, and named The BOARD, or GREAT COUNCIL, of AGRICULTURE. Here your Majeſty will preſide as the imperial citizen of your realms: here, in the pure,

refined

refined and elevated temper of monarchy, you may meet your ſubjects upon even ground, and raiſe your throne in their affection, firm as the pyramids of Egypt; and here, like the clients of Minerva, you may aſſociate to your aſſiſtance men of honour and ſentiment, whoſe liberality, and judgement, whoſe wiſe and prudent œconomy through every duty, every tranſaction of life, enable them to dreſs up the face of the induſtrious in ſmiles, and make all thoſe ſubordinate to their wealth, as happy as the richeſt of them. Men, like theſe, are generous from principle, their munificence is perfectly underſtood. They do not, like the vain, or prodigal, confound generoſity in oſtentation, or intemperance. Such men had rather ſee a farmer thrive, than a vintner; a plough-boy, than a Newmarket-jockey: and promiſe themſelves more real pleaſure from employing a labourer, than a waiter at a bagnio. But, no wonder, the munificence

cence of good men is amply repaid in the heart-felt joy they receive from it; the anxiety and repentance which fall into the account of the vicious, add to their expence.

Let an emanation of this divine eſtabliſhment be ſeen in the metropolis, or every ſhire, or diſtrict in England. Vouchſafe to ſuffer the reſpective Lords-Lieutenant to repreſent your Majeſty in every county-aſſociation, and let a correſpondence be kept up, that every neceſſary information may be communicated to the great council in London. Inveſt this noble confederacy with powers to call upon the rector, church-wardens, or any other perſon, of every pariſh, to tranſmit to the Board an account of what number of acres in *tillage*, *grazing*, *meadow*, or *waſte land*, there may be in his or their particular pariſh. The number of *beaſts* kept, *generically* deſcribed, diſtinguiſhing *fat* from *lean*, and to *whom* they belong. The quantity of

corn

corn ſown, and the quantity *reaped* by each farmer reſpectively, ſpecifying the *particular grain*. The quantity of corn, and of what ſort, *ſent to market* from time to time, and the quantity *kept in hand*. The *number* of *farmers* in each pariſh, the *rents* of each man's poſſeſſions, with the *names* of the *landlords* and *tenants*. An account of the *advanced rents* of each farm for the laſt twenty-five years, and the different periods at which they were augmented. The *number* of *families*, how many *ſouls* each contain, diſtinguiſhing their *ſex* and *age*, how they are *maintained*, and what *manufactories* are carried on in each pariſh.

The Egyptians had a law, obliging every man to give an account once a year, to the magiſtrate, where he lived; how he was ſuſtained; and what he contributed to the public-weal. If ſuch an account was demanded, and faithfully returned from the people in London, what *frightful!* what *ſhameful!* and what piteous ſcenes would be diſcloſed!

and

and no doubt many iniquities prevented, and miſeries removed, from their being revealed—The *poors rate*, and the number of *paupers* in each pariſh, diſtinguiſhing their *age*, *ſex*, and *condition* of *health*. From ſuch a return, your Majeſty will be much alarmed; you will there ſee that your ſubjects in England are taxed with three millions a year, to maintain a number of people, rendered uſeleſs from the preſent mode of parochial management! When the ſtate of the kingdom is thus laid open, your Majeſty will be able to reform the innumerable abuſes, which, tho' known in part, are ſtill encouraged, or at leaſt ſuffered from inattention; you will be a competent judge yourſelf how the poor may be employed, to eaſe the load which their *miſconduct*, or *misfortunes*, have heaped upon the induſtrious. Facts thus faithfully, and uniformly related, will furniſh your Majeſty with ideas, which may be digeſted, and combined into forms,

pleaſing

pleaſing to your ſubjects, and beneficial to the common-wealth. Theſe, with many, many other accounts, the inquiſitive mind will ſuggeſt as neceſſary to the perfection of this national engagement.

From ſuch an open council, inviteing the thoughts, and ſoliciting the aſſiſtance, of every good citizen, your Majeſty would be informed of the true ſtate of your nation, with regard to its natural revenue; and your ſubjects inſtructed to manage with integrity thoſe loans which nature has ſo partially diſtributed in this country. Virtue finding eaſier acceſs, you will no longer be a ſtranger in your dominions: you will have the groans of your people faithfully explained, when ſpeedy and effectual meaſures may be adopted, and purſued, to ſilence the affliction. By the light of ſovereign truth you will pierce the deep receſſes of the heart, and devellop thoſe folds which avarice has ſo

ſkilfully

skilfully entwisted; then, when the mine is open, you can see how the veins run, and direct your operations as the objects present themselves. Thus, by seeing with your own eyes, and hearing with your own ears, truth will introduce you behind the scenes, and reveal novelties that will astonish your Majesty; you will there see the machinery of the Eucolical Drama, and the various actors, who have exhibited the most tragical parts in it.

In the reign of Charles the good, Earl of Flanders, a great famine happened in his dominions; upon which some very rich men, among whom was Bertoff the chancellor, thinking to reap advantage from the misery of the times, bought up all the corn they could find in the land, with a design to sell it out again at an extraordinary price. The Earl, abhorring so detestable an avarice, by his authority, caused the corn to be seized, and sold it to the people at a reasonable rate—Mark the

the ſequel, men who are ſteeled againſt the lamentations of the poor, have hearts tempered for the moſt attrocious undertakings: Bertoff and his aſſociates were ſo incenſed at the injury which *juſtice* had done them, that they aſſaſſinated the Earl, at his devotions, in the church, on aſh-wedneſday, in the year 1127. But the horrid miſcreants ſuffered in proportion to the heinouſneſs of their crime, for human invention was racked to torture them. The like gradation of wickedneſs will be the ſame, in men of the ſame infernal complection; and we have Bertoffs in this country, who only want an opportunity to diſplay their unnatural propenſities.

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LETTER XIX.

The Advantages to Society from the Council of Agriculture conſidered—How political it is to be Honeſt—Lord North a Friend to his Country—Copyholds oppreſſive to the Subject—Concluſion.

A Council of Agriculture carries no novelty but in the name: all nations had their peculiar aſſemblies, to diſcipline, and keep within bounds, the paſſions of mankind. The Athenians had their *Prytaneum* to collect the wiſdom of the wiſeſt for the common benefit of the republic: from ſeeing the cauſe of every diſtreſs they provided againſt them. They had their Σιτῶναι, to furniſh corn for the uſe of the city, and their Σιτοφύλακες, to prevent impoſition in over-rating the ſale of it.

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The Romans had their *Senaculum*; their *Fora Venalia*, where the markets were kept and regulated: the *Prætores cariales* were magiſtrates to inſpect the wants of the people, and to ſee that the city of Rome was amply ſupplied with corn; and the office of *Præfectus frumenti* was to inſpect the corn markets, and to report the true ſtate of them to the *Præfectus urbis*, or chief magiſtrate, who, as guardian of the city, was to ſee that no impoſition, no fraudulent reports, might ſet the agents of avarice at work to diſtreſs the people.

Charlemain, from his regard to juſtice, eſtabliſhed the *miſſi dominici*, thro' every province in his dominions, with inſtructions to hear complaints from the loweſt, and full power to puniſh the loftieſt ſubject, who ſhould be convicted of oppreſſion, or any other enormous crime againſt his people, the ſtate, or the church; and from a reſpect to induſtry, the cauſe of the labourer was firſt heard and determined.

The *grands jours* was an early establishment in France, and had for this object an enquiry into the abuses which might escape the notice of Parliament.

And when princes were more at liberty, and less incumbered with the avarice of office, the kings of England used to visit the distant parts of their kingdom. Justice, unconfounded by the pleas of Law, was then administered faithfully; magistrates were punished for neglect or partiality; dishonest men found no protection; and the poor were assisted and relieved.—The *Troylebaston* was an imposition upon all men bearing offices, who had abused their power, to the injury of the people.

Princes looked so narrowly into the necessities of their lower subjects, that their distresses were removed as soon as they were discovered. When mechanics, and labouring men, were satisfied to travel from town to town on foot, Edwin,

king

king of Northumberland, caused ladies of brass to be fastened to the clear springs and wells, for the refreshment of all such passengers, whose benevolence, however the luxury of our day may have lessened the value, worthy of a prince; and the police, or discipline of his time, preserved such integrity in his kingdom, that had the ladies been gold, no man would have taken them away.

And it is also observable in Elfred's reign, the moderation and industry of the times had made men so continent and honest, that a virgin might travel through his kingdom undisturbed; and though bracelets of pearl were hung by the road side, they would have been more secure then, than they are now upon the wrist of virgin elegance!—What an alarming change!—All our ancient ideas are degenerated; sloth and voluptuousness take up too much room in our affections. Nature, in that beautiful simplicity, which

ſo became our Saxon anceſtors, is unknown to us; and we differ as much from them in the faſhion of our minds, as in the cut of our cloaths.—The cauſes will appear to your Majeſty: prodigality, and idleneſs muſt undergo a ſcrutiny.

In the Saxon heptarchy, all thoſe who contributed to the neceſſaries of life, were, in a particular manner, protected by the law: in thoſe backward times, before the invention of man had contrived water and cattle mills, for grinding of corn, when that material ſervice was performed by maidens, I find in a law of Ethelbert, king of Kent, it is enacted, that any man who ſhould debauch the king's grinding-maid, ſhould be obnoxious to a very ſevere, and heavy fine; from ſuch a national protection, the chaſtity of a meal-maid appears to have been of more importance to the ſtate, than a maid of honour; but I am rather inclined to believe the law interfered to ſupply the

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place of education; for the meaner people, untutored and unarmed, were alone expoſed to ſuch low gratifications; ladies of honourable birth, and well-inſtructed, were then too *modeſt*, and too ſuſceptible, to ſtoop to actions unbecoming the character of their ſex; the mind of a Saxon lady revolted at whatever was indelicate. In this preſent age of refinement, lewdneſs is countenanced, the ladies have ſtipulated with the men, and gallantry is now become a female accompliſhment.

Your Majeſty is upon as good terms with virtue, as were the moſt excellent of our former kings; but your ſubjects have entered into a quite different alliance. Public ſpirit has not the ſame intereſt in the great world, as private vices! Honour, that relative dignity which mankind holds in the idea of moral excellency, is moſt irrationally defined! Drunkenneſs and debauchery are the characters which give currency to an honeſt fellow! Gaming

and effeminacy, to a fine gentleman! Temperance and chastity find credit no where! Wisdom is only caressed by the booksellers, and integrity is respected upon change. Modern ethics must be revised and corrected by your Majesty. The council of Agriculture will open to your inspection the manners of your people; you will see, and be acquainted with the various dispositions that disunite and clash with the ruling principle of this country.

Your Majesty, from such a fertile field of intelligence, must reap abundance of useful knowledge; and by winnowing the harvest yourself, you will be more heedful, and solicitous to separate the chaff from the grain.

The understanding being thus instructed, Seneca's judgement of the liberality of princes will not be understood in your Majesty; you will not, like princes less informed, persist in the royal mistake of bestow-

bestowing your graces blindfold. Your Majesty, looking upon the unflattering portrait of human nature, with the mental eye unclaimed, will discriminate in your mind the found from the corrupted members, which, together, fill up the *imperfect* scheme of national societies: you will make it the interest of every honest man to be a friend to government, and to his country.

By this mode of proceeding, in the council of Agriculture, the rudiments of reformation will radicate, and, by your Majesty's fostering care, will grow up, expand, and over-shadow those malignant weeds, that have for many years interrupted the growth of virtue.

Surely, no one can object to an establishment so humane, and so liberal, but such who subsist by our errors, and abuses; men whose hearts are narrowed by such base affections should be stigmatized with your Majesty's displeasure, for he who neglects to reform, what he might reform, does,

does, at the ſame time, give his conſent to the miſchief, and, therefore, undoubtedly makes himſelf an accomplice in the crime. This was a cenſure paſſed upon the ruling powers, ſo long ago as Charles the Bald, which appears by a clauſe in a law of that time.

To be virtuous only for virtue's ſake, is an excellent precept, but it requires generoſity, and ſentiment, to make the moſt of it; at firſt ſight it ſeems to promiſe nothing, at beſt, only a reverſionary benefit thrown at too great a diſtance to be graſped at with avidity; ſuch abſtracted maxims, wiſe as they are, held up only now and then, will never ſatisfy the exorbitant mind, as they do not fall in with the erudition of Threadneedle-ſtreet; for men who *ſorewdly* and *cloſely* follow the buſineſs of this world, will never be at the expence of learning a new language, only calculated for profits in the next; ſuch accompliſhments are the moſt alarm-

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ing innovations in the state of Mercature politics, and with a steady punctuality *posted* under the article *loss*.

But in the Council of Agriculture, wisdom, founded on truth, will publicly shake hands with every passion, and by tempering those unruly emotions (which have more of nature in them, than divines are willing to allow) all our enjoyments will be explained, and approved; every impulse of the mind will be allured, and directed by rational motives; we shall become virtuous from conviction. To copy others, is a natural inclination; therefore, no sooner shall the banner of example unfold itself, and flutter in every eye, but you will see men of various tempers flocking to the royal pavillion, to share those favourable circumstances, which unaffected wisdom engages to furnish.—Avarice will find an interest in generosity—Pride will admire the ease and address of affability—Idleness, wan and unnerved,

will

will look wishfully on the healthful tint that glows, and the gaity that perpetually smiles, upon the cheek of industry—Ebriosity will upbraid the crutches, and languish for those muscles which confer such masculine strength upon the limbs of temperance—Opulence will solicit the pre-eminence, that mediocrity of fortune so engagingly occupies.

Thus every mistake will be rectified from knowing them, and our true interest perfectly understood; for truth, by making this establishment intelligible, will subdue every prejudice, discipline our future conduct, and convince us, that to be truly rich, is to be truly honest; that the only way to act with justice to ourselves, is to be perfectly just to others; that the man who deceives his friend, over-reaches himself; and defeats his own purpose—When time decyphers the interdeal character, conscience, that distinguishing power of the mind, which suggests to our feelings what

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is right, and what is wrong, will explain what I mean.

Turn aside from the degeneracy of reciprocal commerce, to the meannels of wealth: similar errors appear which disturb the peace, and interfere with the interest of mankind. He who is upon bad terms with his neighbour, is at variance with himself: he loses his dominion when he loses his temper. We can establish real authority only in the good offices we render our fellow creatures; the opulent may command, it is true, but the obedience must shew their authority.

Look into paltoral tyranny, there you will find many gentlemen of three hundred pounds a year, infinitely more supreme, having more influence over the minds and bodies of the village, than their neighbour with ten times that income. Business moves with celerity, when encouraged by generosity, and kindness; but when brutish insolence controls the

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active powers of man, it drags on chearless to the labourer, and unprofitable to the *delinquent* who employs him.

By speculating on facts, we shall no longer blunder in the dark. Reason, that intellectual measure which gives superiority to man, will, from positive information, establish our interest in Philanthropy, and restore the credit of human nature.

Your Majesty is in possession of a minister, who ventures every thing for the honour of his country; and, I believe, he is equally ready to hazard as much for the improvement of it.—It will be said, I speak thus favourably of Lord North, as he is first in power.—I avow it—for if your Majesty's wisdom had not appointed his lordship to that high office, his patriotism, like a flower in the wilderness, would not have been known.

In attempting to do justice to a prime minister, I am as daring as his lordship:

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my intrepidity arises from a conſciouſneſs, that every honeſt man in the oppoſition, upon appealing to the integrity of his heart, will ſay, *Here is no flattery.*

I reſpect and honour Lord North for the ſuperior dignity of his underſtanding; for his perſevering, yet flexile temper; with many other qualities of the mind, ſo particularly adapted to a leader of adminiſtration; and not for his *penſioning* and *appointing* powers, as I abhor and deteſt thoſe *diſſenters* who worſhip the miniſter only as he is the ſupreme diſpoſer of all good things.—The golden calf is not the object of my idolatry.—I hope Lord North has the ſame antipathies.

Your Majeſty is not deſtitute of ſubjects warm as his lordſhip in the intereſt of their country; the Duke of Northumberland, Marquis of Rockingham, Sir George Saville, Sir Walter Blacket, with many other noblemen, and men of fortune, in England.—Lord Hilſborough, and ſeveral

more

more, in Ireland—In North Britain, the Duke of Argyle, Lord Bute, the Reverend Mr. Graham, &c. &c. who, in ſpight of being Scotchmen, have the ſocial virtues hovering about them; but I flatter myſelf, when patriotiſm is recovered from its ſtate of lunacy, all illiberal diſtinctions will be diſcouraged, and a *great*, and *good man* be reſpected whether he is deſcended from a *Norwegian*, or a *Saxon*. As an Engliſhman, who has the honour of his country at heart, I wiſh it.

I muſt in this place catch the ſigh from Doctor Johnſon, and lament the loſs which Agriculture muſt ſuffer, in the North, from the death of Mr. McLeane; *that* amiable young gentlemen, *who*, after having diſcharged the debt of civility, *periſhed* on his return to the *Iſle of Col*. This *honeſt* patriot had made Agriculture a part of his education; he purchaſed experience from the Engliſh farmers; he toiled with them in the field; he turned

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up the [illegible] with his own hand; and thought no labour too hard, when a perfect knowledge in the practical part of husbandry was the end of it. He knew his country called for every effort to fertilize it, and encourage the coyness of the seasons: and he was determined to carry the science with him into the Hebrides.—But, melancholy to relate, he had scarce unfolded the leaf which was to illuminate the minds of his ignorant and needy vassals, when fate precipitately shut up the book. This eulogium from me, is but the praise of an hour; his memory will be embalmed in the imperishable volumes of the truly learned, and ingenious author of the *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland.*

The council of Agriculture will be the most honourable, the most powerful, and, I hope, the most permanent establishment in your Majesty's dominions. Honour-

able, as it will enrich the poor with contentment; the wealth that nature intended to ſettle upon them. Powerful, as the opulent will confirm their authority, by the charter of humanity: and permanent, as your ſubjects are to expect much, and to venture little, for an appointment founded upon public ſpirit, where private intereſt had no ſhare in the firſt idea of it, opens the moſt uninterrupted proſpect of longevity; and a further promiſe of continuance, from a frugality in the conduct of it.

Permit me to obſerve to your Majeſty, that this being, intentionally, a Board of Reformation, you can only expect men of unſullied and benevolent minds to take their ſeat at it: men, who wiſh to prove to the world, that patriotic virtue has nothing venal or mercenary about her. The *building*—perhaps the Pantheon—what an illuſtrious alteration!—*ſecretary, clerks,*

clerks, ſtationary, houſe-keeper, coals, and *candles,* enumerate the expence; for the directors, beyond the ſcandal of a doubt, will officiate, and tranſact their part of the buſineſs from the moſt intereſted motives, the valuable conſideration of doing honour to their country and themſelves, in promoting the happineſs of their fellow-creatures.

Your Majeſty's companions, at this board, being thus aſſociated by moral rectitude, will not be expoſed to thoſe degradations which a more ſplendid order of companions, recommended by vanity on one part, and choſen from affection, or intereſt, on the other, have formerly experienced.

Sir Andrew Harclay, Knight, and Earl of Carliſle, in the reign of Edward the ſecond, was accuſed of receiving a large ſum of money from Sir James Douglas, by which traiterous practice

the king's army was defeated by the Scots, at the Abbey of Bokelande. The ſaid Earl was condemned firſt to have his ſpurs hewed off from his heels, with an ax, and his ſword broke over his head; his gown, hood, girdle and coat, were then taken off. Thus degraded from the honour of knighthood, he was further ſentenced to be hanged, beheaded, and diſbowelled; his bowels to be burnt, his body quartered, his head ſet on London Bridge, and his four quarters hung up in four different towns in England, as a frightful and humiliating example to others. — This judgement was executed in the year 1322, before the order of the garter was inſtituted, conſequently not meant to cenſure any particular aſſociation of men, but only to exhibit a proof in this hiſtorical relation, that even *right honourable* characters, are not exempt from the moſt diſingenuous propenſities.

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This new inſtitution muſt introduce companions who will be faithful to your Majeſty, in their love to your ſubjects; and the paſſions being here levelled to one even ſtandard, they will meet with no diſappointments, to put them out of temper, and ſet them againſt the adminiſtration of Agrarian politics; they will unite in one intereſt, and join *their* wiſdom, and *their* enquiries to your Majeſty's, for one great end —the public good. You will there be adviſed in, and informed of, every occurence in terrene œconomy. You will know that land is rated ſo high in Ireland, that they cannot raiſe ſeed at a price low enough to eſtabliſh their linen manufactory upon a permanent baſis. That your ſubjects in Scotland have little occaſion to emigrate acroſs the Atlantic, ſo long as they have, to the ſhame of many, ſo much uncultivated land in their own country; and what is ſtill more reprehenſible, ſo much waſte

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in ours, even within a few miles of the capital.

The dominicales, lands formerly belonging to the kings of France, were, by order of Charlemain, rented in ſmall parcels, to little farmers, at a ninth part of their value; this philanthropy, as it raiſed many induſtrious families from want, contributed to the welfare of mankind.

In the courſe of your Majeſty's enquiries, it will appear to the Board, that *copyholds*, or what the law very properly terms *baſe tenures*, are exceedingly oppreſſive to your ſubjects; very diſcouraging to induſtry; and repugnant to that Britiſh ſpirit of freedom, which warms the minds of the lower people: and what men of eſtate ſeem ſo paſſionately to admire in theory, and ſo eagerly to avoid in practice. For ſo ungenerous are the humours of men, that while they are raving for liberty in public, they are privately contriving

various

various expedients to enſlave thoſe who fall within the vortex of their power. I can aſſure your Majeſty it is no uncommon thing to ſee a feoffee lord forging chains for his own vaſſals, yet affecting to exterminate the very idea of ſlavery in every other corner of the world. A copyhold is a kind of provincial empire; it has its local courts and cuſtoms, which are as binding as laws; it is the laſt remains of feodal tyranny, and the feodaries are, at this day, dupes to the paſſions of the lord; a prey to the ſteward; and a victim to the interpretation of law.—Many forfeit their right of inheritance from not being acquainted with the modes, or intricacies, of a Court-Baron.—Frequently it has happened that a combination of kindred and tenants have deſtroyed a ſurrender, to ſet aſide the will of a teſtator, to the injury of ſome helpleſs minor, who had the moſt natural right to his benevolence!—and many have

ſuffered

ſuffered the moſt mortifying, the moſt ruinous, diſappointments, from the neglect of ſome other more trifling punctilio, which the conſtitution of former times has entailed upon us. Theſe pernicious dregs of deſpotiſm being made known to your Majeſty, every *honeſt* and *generous* method may be ſuggeſted, diſcuſſed, and proſecuted, to the relief, and ſatisfaction, of *all* parties; that inveſtitures of ſo fatal a tendency may be removed, and every ſubject emancipated in the poſſeſſion of his eſtate.

Your Majeſty may, from time to time, invite the aſſiſtance of parliament, in this important undertaking.

The penal, and parochial laws, will paſs in review, and the confuſed multitude of ſtatutes be reduced to a ſmall, clear, yet comprehenſive code. — Many other favourable changes will take place, to the eaſe and happineſs of a free, and, by nature, a generous people.

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The underſtanding thus informed, and humanity awaken'd, every act of wiſdom, and beneficence, may be expected, from ſuch an aſſemblage of great and good men.

May the choſen ſect, of this new doctrine, approach the Council of Agriculture with clear heads, and unpolluted hearts!—May the *grain* of this country be the *verbenæ*, the ſacred herbs to decorate the altar of truth!—May your Majeſty long fill the *ſuggeſtum*, or chair of pre-eminence, to defend the temple from the contamination of vain men, who prizing their *talents*, more than their *integrity*, deceive mankind into opinions, deſtructive of the peace, and welfare of the nation.—May the bleſſing of abundance be continued for a ſeries of years, under your Majeſty's gracious, and benign government: and when the great ruler of princes may think it fitting to exact from you,

you, the debt ſo juſtly claimed by nature, that the annals of your Majeſty's reign may be held up, by a grateful poſterity, as an un-erring precept, for the conduct of future princes, is the moſt *ardent* and *diſintereſted* wiſh of,

May it pleaſe your Majeſty,

Your MAJESTY'S,

moſt loyal, and moſt devoted,

Subject and Servant,

W. DONALDSON.

F I N I S.